

# I Shall Seal the Heavens

(我欲封天)

## Book 6

Fame That Rocks the Ninth Mountain

The Path to True Immortality

Er Gen

(刘勇)

Story Description:

Shall Seal the Heavens is currently one of the most popular xianxia stories in China. It is about a failed young scholar named Meng Hao who gets forcibly recruited into a Sect of Immortal Cultivators. In the Cultivation world, the strong prey on the weak, and the law of the jungle prevails. Meng Hao must adapt to survive. And yet, he never forgets the Confucian and Daoist ideals that he grew up studying. This, coupled with his stubborn nature, set him on the path of a true hero. What does it mean to “Seal the Heavens?” This is a secret that you will have to uncover along with Meng Hao!

Original Story can be found here: [Link](#)

# Chapter 801: We Will Meet Again!

Meng Hao's father and mother didn't hesitate for even a moment. As long as there was a chance for Meng Hao to get better, they were willing to pay any price. If that price was a loss of freedom, and required them to relinquish their status and prestige and go to Planet South Heaven to guard it for 100,000 years...

Then they were willing!

They would leave Planet East Victory, and take Meng Hao and his older sister with them. They would leave the Fang Clan!

On the eve of their departure, the entire elder generation of the Fang Clan emerged to see them. Because they could not take anything with them that was contaminated with their Karma, Meng Hao's father was forced to leave everything behind.

The only thing he took was an iron sword.

They did not take Meng Hao's two Nirvana Fruits with them. The clan's elder generation, including the Patriarch, chose to hold them in safe keeping. When Meng Hao recovered and returned, the two Nirvana Fruits would belong to him.

Meng Hao's father sneered coldly in response to this. How could he not understand the true meaning behind the directive? Originally, he hadn't planned to leave the Nirvana Fruits behind.

"Very well, the Nirvana Fruits will be left here with the Clan Chief," he said, his eyes glittering with a sharp light. "In a few years, Hao'er will personally return to retrieve them!" With that, he tossed out the precious treasures that were the Nirvana Fruits.

Of course, what the elders didn't know was that to Meng Hao's father, these two precious treasures were actually the source of incredible sorrow.

They left a few days later, taking Meng Hao and his older sister with them. Ever since the most recent Nirvanic Rebirth, he had been lethargic and somewhat blank.

When they arrived at Planet South Heaven, they went to the remote State of Zhao, beneath Mount Daqing, and settled down in Yunjie County. Meng Hao's sister didn't stay with them. She went to the Eastern Lands, where she joined the Eastern Lands division of the Fang Clan, and focused on cultivation. She wanted to leave her father and mother alone to spend what remained of the seven years with her little brother.

During those seven years, Meng Hao was actually very happy. He gradually grew to be very intelligent, and began to focus on studying. On the eve of his seventh birthday, a violet wind gusted outside. His parents were heartbroken and anxious, but in order to save his life, they left. They had no other choice.

When he awoke and began to weep, his parents broke down....

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Meng Hao opened his eyes. The tears streaming down his face had soaked his garments. The vision faded away, and he saw his father and mother sitting there in front of him.

He could now see some white hairs on his mother's head that hadn't been there before. His father's face looked older than it had in the past.

They were looking at Meng Hao with a love that made his heart tremble.

Now he understood everything. His doubts were resolved. His questions were answered. When he saw the events that had taken place in his previous two lifetimes, they seemed like a dream. Yet now he had awokened, and still, everything that had happened during the dream remained in his head, and would never be wiped away.

"Seventh Year Tribulation...." he thought. "My parents agreed to guard this place for 100,000 years.... for me. 100,000 years...." Meng Hao couldn't even wrap his head around such an incredible period of time. The twisted feeling in his heart was completely gone. He no longer felt wronged, and in fact, felt a bit of pain and regret.

His parents did not deserve blame.

They had paid far, far too much, and never complained even once. They

did not make any demands of him, nor ask for any compensation. They only wanted... for him to be able to live.

Meng Hao trembled, and even more tears began to stream down his face.

“Mom....” he said softly. “Dad....”

Trembling, his mom stepped forward and took him into her arms. She was crying too.

“Hao’er, everything’s going to be fine. You transcended the tribulation. Everything will be okay....”

Meng Hao’s father, who was once the eldest son and direct bloodline descendant of the Fang Clan, an astonishing Chosen who was still marveled at in the outside world, stepped forward and wrapped his arms around his wife and son.

“It’s past us now, Hao’er. It’s all in the past now....” His voice quavered a bit, and he was crying too. This was only the second time he had ever cried as an adult.

The first time was when Meng Hao had experienced Nirvanic Rebirth for the second time. When he watched his son revert from being seven to an infant, when he saw the pain on Meng Hao’s tiny face, when he saw his eyes slowly grow listless... he had cried.

“What about my big sister...?” Meng Hao asked softly. He would never be able to forget the image of his stern older sister protecting him in his second lifetime.

Nor would he ever forget the words she had spoken.

Don’t be scared little brother, your big sister is here to protect you!

Weeping happily, his mother responded, “She’s been in secluded meditation in the Eastern Lands for some time. After we go back, we’ll wait for her to emerge, and then we can have a big reunion!”

“What about Grandpa Meng and Grandpa Fang...?” asked Meng Hao. When he asked the question, his father stood there silently for a

moment. Meng Hao's heart began to thump. He remembered that his two grandfathers had left together to go search for an Outsider.

The Outsider came, but his two grandfathers had never returned.

After a long moment, his father said, "All things come with a price. Your Grandpa Meng's and Grandpa Fang's life lamps still burn. They are still alive, but... we don't know where they are."

Meng Hao sat there silently, and his heart twinged painfully. Now that he knew the reason for everything, he felt deep guilt regarding his two grandfathers.

Were it not for them, that Outsider would never have appeared, and he would have long since returned to the dust, with only four Nirvana Fruits left behind.

It was because of him that his two Grandfathers had never returned.

Furthermore, his parents were stuck guarding South Heaven for 100,000 years. When he thought about this, Meng Hao felt even worse. He looked at his parents, and although he didn't say anything, his feelings were already etched deeply in his heart.

He would never be able to pay back the kindness shown to him by his parents and relatives.

Patriarch Blood Demon never awoke, and soon it came time for Meng Hao to leave with his father and mother. His father and mother faced to Mount Blood Demon, clasped hands and bowed deeply.

A few days later, when the restoration work was well under way in the Southern Domain, Meng Hao and his parents left. Before returning to the Eastern Lands, they went to visit his master, Pill Demon.

His mother and father were very grateful for everything Pill Demon had done, and even offered expensive gifts. In response, however, Pill Demon's face darkened. It didn't matter that he was facing people with mighty cultivation bases, he refused to accept the gifts.

"Meng Hao is my disciple! How could I accept gifts from you!?" he said.

Meng Hao's father clasped hands and bowed deeply to him, then sent out a strand of his Dao will, which solidified inside of Pill Demon's body and caused a tremor to run through him.

Dao Will such as this was something very important to Pill Demon, and would help him to verify his path of cultivation.

"How rude of us," said Meng Hao's father. "Forgive me, Grandmaster. Please accept this strand of Dao will. Hao'er was not born in the lands of South Heaven, so the Immortal destiny for this ten thousand year period cannot belong to him. Grandmaster, I very much admire your aspirations regarding the Dao. When your true Immortal Tribulation arrives, I will personally act as a Dao Protector for you!"

They stayed in the Violet Fate Sect for several days. Chu Yuyan continuously avoided Meng Hao, which caused him to sigh. However, he didn't force the matter, and eventually left with his parents. They went to visit Patriarch Song, and then finally left the Southern Domain.

When they transformed into beams of prismatic light that shot off into the distance, Chu Yuyan was standing proudly on a mountain peak in the Violet Fate Sect. She said nothing, but merely stood there, looking somewhat desolate. When Pill Demon caught sight of her, he sighed.

It was in this fashion that Meng Hao left the Southern Domain with his parents.

On the way, Meng Hao mentioned that he wanted to stop by the Milky Way Sea to look for that old turtle Patriarch Reliance. Meng Hao's mother shook her head with a smile.

"The turtle you're talking about left a long time ago. He's not in the lands of South Heaven any more."

Meng Hao gaped, and then a hateful expression appeared on his face. "It's a good thing he left so quickly," he thought to himself, "otherwise I would have tracked him down and shown him a thing or two!"

Meanwhile, out in the starry sky....

An enormous turtle was drifting among the stars. He had an entire

continent on his back, upon which existed countless lives, including numerous cultivators and sects.

Of course, they didn't realize that they were floating out among the stars. When they looked up, what they saw was a magically produced sky.

The turtle, of course, was none other than Patriarch Reliance. Currently, his head was tucked inside of his shell, and he was humming a little tune. He looked incredibly happy and proud of himself.

"Heh heh heh! The Patriarch is the most incredible, yet again! Now that I've fled out here, that little bastard will never be able to find me!"

"Hahaha! From now on, my future is as boundless as the sea and sky! The Patriarch has freedom at last!"

"Let's see how that little bastard reacts when he finds out that I'm no longer on Planet South Heaven. He'll be struck dumb! Hahaha!" The thought of Meng Hao going to the Milky Way Sea to look for him, only to be unable to find him, caused Patriarch Reliance's spirits to instantly be lifted even higher. He continued to muse on how he was vastly more intelligent than Meng Hao.

"You want the Patriarch to be your Dao Protector? Impossible! Ai... it's all the fault of those old bastards from the League of Demon Sealers. They must have damaged my brain somehow. How come it didn't occur to me before that I could simply fly away from Planet South Heaven?!"

"Although, it's better late than never. Now that I've finally flown away from South Heaven, I feel like I've actually gotten smarter!"

"Aiyyaa, where should I go now? Ah, it doesn't really matter. I remember that years ago I had a beloved on Planet East Victory. I wonder how she's doing after all these years? I should go see my old sweetheart." Sighing somewhat emotionally, Patriarch Reliance flickered as he shot toward Planet East Victory, taking the State of Zhao with him.

As he flew, he hummed his little tune, feeling extremely happy....

There was someone else speeding along through the starry sky. It was a crazy old man who was clearly not Immortal. However, for some reason,

he emanated a strong Immortal qi, and was capable of flying among the stars.

“Immortal Ascension.... Immortal Ascension....” As his voice echoed out, a strange transformation seemed to be occurring. His face was ancient for a moment... but then looked young all of a sudden.

However, the old face and the young face looked different from each other. They were two different people!

This was the 10th Wang Clan Patriarch. As for the transformation to his appearance... were Meng Hao here, he would recognize that young face. It was none other than... Wang Tengfei, whose soul had been swallowed up by his ancestor!

Meanwhile, two figures appeared on the border between the Northern Reaches and the Eastern Lands, creeping forward stealthily. One of them was a young man in black robes who looked delicate and pretty, almost like a scholar. If you looked closely, he actually resembled Meng Hao. However, there was a perverted expression in his eyes that completely ruined the entire image.

Next to him was a tall, fat man, who occasionally mumbled complaints.

“Run, run, run away. All you know how to do is run away. I’ve been telling you all along, this is wrong. It’s immoral! It’s very, very shameless! We should never have fled back then.... We’re finished. Completely finished! Meng Hao has become incredibly powerful.... What do we do now? What is Lord Third supposed to do now?”

“Shut the hell up!” the young man replied loftily, looking at the fat man out of the corner of his eye. “Lord Fifth hasn’t even said anything yet, what are you flapping your gums for? What the hell do you want? Let me ask you, do you know what comes after three? Can you count all the way to five?

“Well, Lord Fifth can!

“Have faith in the Lord Fifth, gain eternal life! Lord Fifth is taking you to the Eastern Lands! With this feather that fell from the sky, we’re definitely

going to be able to live the good life!" The young man shook his body in much the same way that a bird does when straightening out its feathers.

# Chapter 802: Immortal Ancient Dao Medallion!

In the vast Eastern Lands was the ancient city of Chang'an.

It was a place that countless scholars in the lands of South Heaven dreamed of. All of them hungered to pay homage to the Great Tang, and to stroll through Chang'an.

The military strength of the Great Tang was incredible, and even possessed garrison states populated entirely by cultivators. There was no location in the mortal worlds of South Heaven in which people did not pay homage to the Great Tang.

It was no surprise that there were great numbers of sects and clans in the Eastern Lands. Their strength and influence exceeded that of any of the powers that existed in the Northern Reaches, Southern Domain or Western Desert. In terms of sects alone, there were nine major ones.

In addition, there were seven great clans with vast numbers of disciples, followers, and clan members. The Eastern Lands were a flourishing place with countless Chosen, many of whom were famous even in the other continents.

Even the Imperial family had its own Daoist teachings and doctrines, which they used to exercise control over the whole continent. The Tang Emperor himself possessed a powerful cultivation base, and although he rarely made public appearances, his power held sway over the all the land.

Chang'an was the center of it all, and was encircled by ten defensive fortresses. Of those, eight belonged directly to the Great Tang, with the remaining fortresses belonging to two different clans.

One was the Fang Clan and the other was the Ji Clan!

Just because they occupied the defensive fortresses didn't mean that these two clans bowed their heads to the power of the Emperor. They were independent, and in fact, above everyone else. It was the other sects and clans who bowed their heads to them!

This was especially true of the Ji Clan. The Heavens themselves belonged to the Ji Clan, so who was there that could possibly surpass them?

As for the Fang Clan, they had vast and powerful resources at their disposal. Although they were only a subdivision of the main clan, they were still deep and immeasurable. Of course, in compliance with their clan rules, they respected the Great Tang, and would protect the Tang Dynasty for all time. After all... the Tang Emperor was surnamed Li! 1

However, despite the fact that these were the circumstances surrounding Meng Hao at the moment, they were far distant from his daily life.

Currently, Meng Hao sat cross-legged in a courtyard in the Fang Clan, underneath an ancient tree. Sitting next to him was a trembling little crocodile who was oh-so-cautiously looking at the man sitting cross-legged in front of Meng Hao.

That man was none other than Meng Hao's father.

"Hao'er," he said, "your future path is your own to tread. As to what you do and how you do it, your mother and I can assist from the sidelines, but will not help you directly. The most important thing you should focus on is... Immortal Ascension!"

"You're already halfway into true Immortality, lacking only that final half step. Then you will be in the Immortal Realm.

"The chance to gain true Immortality is something that comes along once every 10,000 years. There are many cultivators of the elder generation, and even current Chosen, who are willing to suppress their own cultivation bases, all for the chance to get that true Immortal destiny.

"During this 10,000 year period, the true Immortal destiny lies in the lands of South Heaven. However, since you weren't born on South Heaven, it cannot belong to you. The location of your true Immortality is on Planet East Victory.

"The simplest way to achieve true Immortal Ascension is by means of the rarely seen Immortality Illumination Vine. Use that to gain

enlightenment regarding the meaning of Immortality, and you can achieve true Immortal Ascension.

“Although Immortality Illumination Vines are rare, it is not impossible to acquire them. In fact, there are enough that, during each 10,000 year period, most powerful sects manage to produce one or two true Immortals. However, the vines are only effective in the 1,000 years after the true Immortal destiny appears.

“The second way to achieve true Immortal Ascension is very difficult, and that is to acquire the Immortal destiny that appears once every 10,000 years, and use it to tread the path to true Immortality. That is the path your master Pill Demon must take.

“Both of these types of Immortals are true Immortals.

“Your master is going about it the most difficult way. If he succeeds, then he will most certainly be taken away by some powerful organization and made a Conclave disciple.

“Therefore, when the time comes for your master’s true Immortal Ascension, the lands of South Heaven are going to be a very lively place. The various Chosen of other sects and clans who have left South Heaven will return to fight for their chance. When that time comes, I will act as Dao Protector for your master.

“As for you, after you help your master transcend his tribulation, then you will go to Planet East Victory. Father has already prepared an Immortality Illumination Vine for you there!

“Initially, using the Immortality Illumination Vine produces a slightly inferior result. However, cultivation isn’t always dependent on the first steps, and using that method can also lead you to great glory.

“So there are only these two ways to achieve true Immortal Ascension?” asked Meng Hao, a bit surprised. “Why could the Resurrection Lily achieve it?”

“People aren’t flowers and flowers aren’t people. The path of the Resurrection Lily can be learned from, but if cultivators try to follow it,

they will find it very difficult to realize their Dao.

"There is a third path which is not dependent on any of the planets or any Immortal lands. It is to achieve true Immortality... by your own power!"

"This is a very rare thing. According to the legends, only Patriarch Ksitigarbha, the Earth Store Bodhisattva of the Fourth Mountain 2, has ever traveled that path. Other than him, no one has ever pulled it off. When he did, it caused all of the Immortal qi in the Mountain and Sea Realm to surge and swirl towards him, such that everyone knew about it."

"As to how to tread that path, even I don't know." Meng Hao's father shook his head. Even though he had a high opinion of Meng Hao, he didn't think it was possible for him to tread that third path. "For now," he said, looking at Meng Hao sternly, "focus on my nine sword forms. Make sure you understand them thoroughly."

Sadly, Meng Hao's older sister Fang Yu was still unable to emerge from secluded meditation. Meng Hao's return had caused many in South Heaven's Fang Clan to act with great caution. They were unfamiliar with him, and didn't dare to even try to probe him for information.

Word of Meng Hao's deeds in the Southern Domain had long since spread amongst the cultivators of the vast Eastern Lands.

When it came to the Ji Clan, there quite a few people there who were currently vacillating nervously.... Those people were the Chosen who owed Meng Hao spirit stones from back in the Demon Immortal Sect. There were Chosen from other sects in the Eastern Lands as well, all of whom had mixed feelings about Meng Hao.

As they sat there beneath the tree, Meng Hao's father waved his hand, causing a scintillating command medallion to fly out toward Meng Hao. It came to rest in front of him, where it floated in the air. It only took a glance for Meng Hao to be able to sense the vast ancientness pulsing off of it.

"This is an Immortal Ancient Dao Medallion," said Meng Hao's father.

"In the future, when you leave the lands of South Heaven, you could

return home to the clan to continue your cultivation, or you could use this medallion to join the Ninth Mountain's Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite and cultivate their Daoist magic!

"In the Ninth Mountain and Sea, there are many Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temples. Whenever one of those temples opens its doors, it will attract a lot of attention.

"Currently, only the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite of the Ninth Mountain continues to pass on its legacies. Many cultivators practice cultivation among them, making them one of the most superlative Daoist Societies in the Ninth Mountain. By the time any Daoist rite temple is revealed to the world, it will already long since been left untended and abandoned.

"Only the most powerful of Chosen can join the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite. Lord Li joined, as did Lord Ji. The Fang Patriarch of that era also joined. Their requirements for accepting disciples are very strict. However, if you possess an Immortal Ancient Dao Medallion, then you can join directly as a Conclave disciple.

"Take good care of this medallion!

"The medallion has another function. I happened to discover an Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple. Although it's deserted, if you enter it, the temple will automatically come to life....

"Accept the medallion's guidance, and you can cultivate enlightenment in the temple. It will greatly improve your chances at achieving Immortal Ascension.

"However, after the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple comes to life, others will detect it. Therefore, Chosen from the sects and clans of the other planets will come to try to seize the luck and good fortune in the temple.

"What they will be most interested in obtaining is the Immortal Ancient Dao Medallion.

"That will be your chance to hone your skills."

Meng Hao looked closer at the medallion, and inside, he could just barely make out an Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple, filled with countless figures practicing cultivation. There was also a glowing Immortal who was giving a sermon regarding the Dao.

The music of a great Dao floated through the air, which Meng Hao couldn't hear clearly. However, it caused him to perceive an unusual sensation of being bathed in an celestial radiance, with Immortal qi swirling around him.

After a long moment, he trembled, and recovered his senses. He quickly reached out to take hold of the Immortal Ancient Dao Medallion.

"Keep the Dao medallion safe, and achieve Immortal ascension. Those are my tests for you. If you can't accomplish these things... then it would be better for you to stay here with me and your mother.

"If you can fight with all your might against the Chosen of the sects and clans of the other planets, if you can protect this medallion, if you can achieve true Immortal Ascension, then... your mother and I will be confident that you are ready to leave us and forge your own glorious future!"

Meng Hao clutched the Immortal Ancient Dao Medallion, looked up at his father, and slowly nodded.

Meng Hao's father looked back and then smiled. It was a smile full of love and encouragement.

"Go," he said. "Leave this crocodile here. When you achieve Immortal Ascension, it will be the mount you can use when you leave. Hao'er... you did not have me and your mother at your side in this lifetime. You've reached your current stage by relying only on your own efforts!"

"Likewise, I believe that in the future... you won't need help from me or your mother. Your path will lead you much further... and you can do it on your own!"

Meng Hao took a deep breath and then bowed to his father.

"Now go. We cultivators don't focus on the trifles in life. Besides...

you've grown up." His father's smile grew wider. From the look in his eye, you could see that he wished for his son to be a dragon, to truly succeed. It was a look similar to the one Meng Hao had seen in the eyes of Ke Yunhai.

Meng Hao rose to his feet and caught sight of his mother approaching. She walked up to him, adjusted his clothes, and then looked at him lovingly. She clearly did not wish to part with him, and was also worried.

"Mom, I'm fine," he said with a bashful smile.

When she saw his smile, his mother shook her head.

"That's the same smile you used to make when you were little," she said, "whenever you were about to get into mischief."

Meng Hao's smile grew even more bashful. He chatted a bit more with his parents, then clasped hands and bowed. Giving them a final deep look, he turned and made his way off into the distance.

They watched him leaving, and Meng Hao's mother sighed.

"This is how cultivators were meant to practice cultivation," his father said calmly. "Hao'er is a dragon amongst men. His path... is his own to tread!"

"I'm still worried though..." his mother said.

"It was without our help that he stepped halfway into true Immortality," his father replied proudly. "He's grown up, and given his personality, it would be impossible for him to stay with us here for 100,000 years. Since we can't leave, he needs to temper himself with appropriate challenges. Moreover... in all the Ninth Mountain and Sea, there truly are few who have achieved a cultivation base like his at such an age!"

"I'm just afraid that this Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple that you've activated will attract people above the Spirit Realm..." his mother said softly.

Meng Hao's father laughed coolly. "Fang Xiufeng makes the rules here on Planet South Heaven, and I say... if anyone above the Spirit Realm dares to enter, I'll just kill them!"

Meng Hao left the Fang Clan, the first time he had done so since arriving. The streets were busy, and as he looked around at the bustle, it was clear that this was a city of mortals. There were cultivators present too, but they didn't dare to act superior to others. Apparently, cultivators were not permitted to act aggressively in the lands controlled by the Great Tang.

Meng Hao looked up, and off in the distance he could see an enormous city. That was... Chang'an.

At first glance it looked ordinary, but when Meng Hao circulated his Immortal qi, he was shocked to find that there were ninety-five gold dragons spiraling through the air above the city. Occasionally they would let out shocking roars. Of course, it was something that everyone else could not see or hear.

Gradually, the ninety-five dragons merged together into a figure sitting there in midair. When Meng Hao looked at it, the figure seemed to sense his gaze, and then looked back at him.

Suddenly, a majestic voice filled Meng Hao's mind. "The son of Elder Brother Fang. As expected, you are quite extraordinary. It's a pleasure to meet you. Allow me to bless you with some qi reserves to incorporate into your body."

The ninety-five dragons each spit streams of draconic qi, which merged together into an extremely lifelike golden dragon. It turned into a golden beam of light that shot through the air and merged into Meng Hao. As it swirled through his body, an incredibly refreshing feeling filled him.

Cracking sounds could be heard from inside him, and an otherworldly aura seemed to be washing over him, like a baptism. It almost seemed as if he had formed a resonance with the land, and could now see various Daoist magics and natural laws wherever he looked.

Meng Hao's mind trembled as the figure looked away from him.

"The Tang Emperor!" gasped Meng Hao. He was certain that the person just now.... was the Emperor of the Great Tang!

"The lands of South Heaven are filled with hidden dragons and crouching tigers...." he thought. "The Emperor of the Great Tang has an unfathomable cultivation base. Is South Heaven the only place like this, or are the other planets similar? Perhaps only people in the same Realm as father can understand such things."

Meng Hao clasped hands and bowed toward Chang'an. Then, he transformed into a beam of colorful light as he followed the Immortal Ancient Dao Medallion's guidance toward the temple. His second true self became the shadow beneath him, following him wherever he went.

Meng Hao had just appeared outside the city, and was about to head off into the distance, when his eyes glittered.

"I heard mom say that the Ji Clan isn't too far away from here...." A bashful smile appeared on his face and he rubbed his bag of holding. He still had many promissory notes inside, some of which were written by Chosen of the Ji Clan.

"I think it's time to go settle accounts...." Meng Hao thought with a dry cough. He took out a jade slip which continued a detailed map of the vast Eastern Lands. After examining it for a moment, he headed toward the Ji Clan's fortress....

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1. The character in the surname of the Tang Emperor is 李, the same as Lord Li, previous ruler of the Ninth Mountain as well as the Li Clan, which we know exists on Planet North Reed, and whose auxiliary branch was destroyed by Meng Hao.
2. Ksitigarbha was previously mentioned in chapter 702.

# Chapter 803: Going to the Ji Clan to Collect Debts

The Ji Clan didn't just have one ancestral mansion, but many. The one located within the fortress was just one of those.

It was enormous and sprawling, taking up roughly thirty percent of the entire fortress. On the outside it looked relatively ordinary, but once you stepped foot inside, you would catch sight of indescribably beautiful carved balustrades and marble steps.

An ancient, aged will emanated out in all directions, making every block of wood and stone seem sentient. It was something completely extraordinary that even the Eastern Lands' Fang Clan couldn't equal.

Meng Hao navigated his way through the fortress using the map, and eventually found the Ji Clan's main gate. He walked up the gate and cleared his throat. As he looked around, he didn't see anyone around standing guard.

He knocked, and, seeing that there was no reaction from within, flew up into the air and prepared to simply fly into the mansion. However, a massive pressure bore down on him as soon as he rose up into the air. Clearly, the airspace here was restricted.

Meng Hao suddenly heard someone chuckling behind him.

"Fellow Daoist, don't waste your time! People like you come here every day hoping to pay respects to the Ji Clan."

There were two cultivators there who had caught sight of Meng Hao as they were passing by.

"The Ji Clan is the number one clan in the lands of South Heaven," said the first one, "and this is one of their ancestral mansions. You think you can just waltz right in? The only way to get inside is if you're invited by the Ji Clan."

"Why even try?" chuckled the second one. "You might end up irritating

one of the Ji Clan members, and then you'd be in grave danger."

Actually, Meng Hao's handsome appearance and down-to-earth disposition left these two cultivators with a good impression, so they really were trying to help him out.

"I'm not here to pay respects," said Meng Hao, coughing lightly. "I'm here to collect some debts." His eyes suddenly glittered brightly as he caught sight of the two iron hoop handles that adorned the main gate.

The two iron hoops seemed ordinary, but by using his Celestial Vision technique, he could instantly sense the aura of ancient magical symbols pulsing off of them.

"These things are magical treasures!" Meng Hao thought. Taking a step forward, he grabbed one of the iron hoops and then yanked hard on it. Unfortunately, the gate didn't budge an inch. The two startled cultivators looked on in shock.

"Fellow Daoist, what... what are you doing?"

Meng Hao took a deep breath, and strange gleam appeared in his eyes. As he prepared to yank on the iron hoop a second time, the wide-eyed cultivators behind him began to back up. They came to the citadel frequently to go shopping, and often saw cultivators pacing back and forth in front of the Ji Clan's main gate, hoping to gain entrance to offer respects.

However, they had never, ever seen someone covet the iron hoops on the main gate. The mere sight of it made their scalps numb. As they backed up, Meng Hao wrenched at the iron hoop with full force.

Some distance away, a group of seven or eight youths were loitering on the street corner, chatting and laughing. When they noticed what Meng Hao was doing, one of their number gaped for a moment and then let out a roar of fury. He instantly flew into the air toward Meng Hao.

"How brazen! Did you just eat a dragon heart?! How dare you behave so boorishly in front of the Ji Clan!?!?"

The two cultivators near Meng Hao were so scared they could barely

speak, and began to back up even faster.

"Not good! It's Ji Xueming! He's a Quasi-Array disciple of the Ji Clan!"

Ji Xueming's hands flashed in an incantation gesture as he whistled through the air. Bright light pulsed off of his body, which then transformed into a long spear that emanated a strong force like a tornado. He stabbed the spear toward Meng Hao without hesitation.

As Meng Hao stood there at the entrance to the Ji Clan, he turned his head to look at the incoming spear, then gave a cold snort. He waved his right index finger, causing the long spear to tremble and then explode into pieces. The shockwave didn't even lift a hair on Meng Hao's head, but Ji Xueming was sent tumbling backward through the air. He slammed into the ground about three hundred meters away, coughing up blood, his face ashen.

His companions' faces filled with rage as they looked over at Meng Hao.

"Looking to die!?!?!" Ji Xueming howled, crawling to his feet. His cultivation base was at the late Nascent Soul stage, and although Meng Hao's cultivation base was not visible to him, he raged at him nonetheless.

"You're Ji Xueming?" Meng Hao asked. "Okay, hold on a second...." With that, Meng Hao slapped his bag of holding to produce a large stack of promissory notes. After flipping through them for a moment, his eyes sparkled and pulled out one in particular.

"Are you related to Ji Xuelin?" he continued, sounding hopeful. 1

"He's my big brother! How dare you act so wildly in the Ji Clan! You're DEAD!!" With a shrill cry, he waved his right hand, causing spiritual energy to surge in mid-air, giving rise to ripples that only a cultivator could see.

Meng Hao smiled bashfully, then proceeded to ignore Ji Xueming and look back at the iron hoops. He was getting even more excited about them.

"This is really a lovely treasure!" he thought, causing his cultivation base to begin to rotate. His Dharma Idol flickered into being behind him, which then reached down to grab an iron ring and yank on it.

A boom could be heard as the entire main gate shuddered. Even the ground quaked as the iron ring... was ripped off the door by Meng Hao.

The two cultivators who had just been trying to persuade Meng Hao to leave, were now watching with wide eyes.

Ji Xueming's companions' eyes went even wider with disbelief, as if they had seen a ghost. As for Ji Xueming, his shrill cry gurgled to a stop, and he gaped at Meng Hao in shock.

The huge boom just now had echoed throughout the city, and quite a few cultivators had hurried over to see what was happening. When they saw what was going on, they instantly began to cry out in shock.

"He... he ripped off a door hoop?"

"That's... that's impossible...."

"Is that guy crazy!? How could he possibly dare to provoke the Ji Clan!!"

"This is the Ji Clan's ancestral mansion, a representation of the whole clan's face! And yet... he actually ripped a door hoop off!!"

"He's poking the Heavens in the eye!!"

A buzz of conversation immediately echoed out.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he hefted the iron hoop in his hand to get a sense of its weight. Then, his eyes shone with a gleam of pleasure.

"Truly a lovely treasure," he thought. It was at this point that his head swiveled to look at the other iron hoop. He was just about to reach out and grab it when a cold snort echoed out from inside the Ji Clan. Next, the gates silently swung open and a young man walked out.

His long hair draped down over his shoulders, and his features were handsome, albeit cold. A Spirit Severing aura swirled around him as he strode out. Instantly, a rumbling sound filled the air, as if bizarre ripples were spreading out from his body.

"According to the clan rules," the young man said as he walked out, "anyone who damages the clan gate will be exterminated to the ninth

degree of kinship.” He looked over coldly at Meng Hao, and then suddenly, his jaw dropped.

Three hundred meters away, Ji Xueming didn’t notice that point. He was extremely excited and cried out, “Big brother, kill that guy!”

Meng Hao’s eyes gleamed with a strange light. As soon as he laid eyes on this newcomer, he couldn’t help but feel happy. He laughed loudly and then said, “Fellow Daoist Xuelin, do you remember me?”

At first, the young man’s bearing had been cold and aloof, but after looking closely at Meng Hao and hearing his words, his face went deathly white. Even if he had a more steely will, he would still have cried out hoarsely in alarm. As it was, he couldn’t prevent himself from staggering backward several paces.

“No, I don’t remember!” he cried out, then slammed the gate shut.

Eyes glittering, Meng Hao lifted his right foot up and then kicked hard onto the huge gate. A boom echoed out as the gate crashed open. Ji Xuelin was on the other side, and was sent tumbling backward, blood spurting out of his mouth. Then he began to cry out loudly.

“Meng Hao’s here! Meng Hao’s here!!”

His urgent call immediately caused the faces of numerous Ji Clan old-timers to flicker. As for the Chosen who happened to be in the mansion, they didn’t comprise all of the Ji Clan Chosen. However, there were four or five who happened to owe Meng Hao spirit stones, and their faces filled with shock.

When the people gathered outside the Ji Clan heard Ji Xuelin’s call, they were completely taken aback. Many weren’t able to put the pieces together, but there were some whose expressions flickered with understanding.

“Meng Hao? That’s the guy who ended the war between the Southern Domain and the Northern Reaches! He’s half a step into true Immortality, and is the number one figure in his generation!”

“It’s him... he’s actually in the Eastern Lands. Dammit! Now that I think

about it, the sect issued orders recently that we are not to offend Meng Hao in any way! I didn't understand before, because I thought he was in the Southern Domain. But it turns out he's already in the Eastern Lands!"

"So... he really is Meng Hao!"

Stories of the war of the Southern Domain had long since spread widely throughout all the lands, and Meng Hao's name could be heard everywhere. He had sealed the cultivation bases of more than 100,000 Northern Reaches cultivators, cutting off their path to the Nascent Soul stage and reducing them to felon citizens. Furthermore, he had summoned a huge mountain to suppress five peak Dao Seeking experts.

Because of all of that, Meng Hao was now thoroughly famous in all the lands of South Heaven.

Ji Xueming stood there quivering, face pale and eyes wide. He vaguely remembered that some time ago, word had been passed down through the clan forbidding anyone from provoking Meng Hao.

Everything trembled as Meng Hao entered the Ji Clan. As he passed the nearly destroyed gate, he casually reached down to wrench off the other iron hoop, which he put in his bag of holding.

The sight of him doing so caused gasps to rise up from the people who stood outside watching; Meng Hao's domineering manner had already left them with a deep impression. On the other hand, flames of rage could be seen burning in the Ji Clan members' eyes.

After all... there were only a few people who actually owed him spirit stones. To all the other members of the Ji Clan, Meng Hao's actions just now were nothing short of blasphemous.

Immediately, eight older members of the Clan snorted coldly and then stepped forward. Hands were waved, and divine abilities appeared. However, when they neared Meng Hao, his eyes flickered and he flicked his sleeve. Rumbling echoed out as a storm wind rose up. It blasted out in all directions, causing the eight older clan members to tumble back with blood spraying from their mouths.

Meng Hao cleared his throat and pulled out some promissory notes.

"I'm not here to cause a ruckus," he said, as he began leafing through the notes. "I just want to collect some debts. Ji Xuelin, Ji Tianyi, Ji Xiaoxiao...." In a brief moment, he recited seven or eight names.

Finally, he looked up.

"When exactly were you people planning on paying me back the tens of millions of spirit stones you owe me?! Hand them over!!"

His voice roared out to be heard not only by the entire Ji Clan, but also everyone on the outside. Instantly, all of the people whose names he recited, with the exception of those not present, suddenly grew incredibly wrathful. How could they not? After all, the sheer amount of spirit stones owed... made it impossible for them to pay off the debt.

"You're shameless, Meng Hao! You forced us to write those promissory notes!"

"We didn't want to write them! You made us!!"

"Yeah, you threatened us! We had no choice but to sign the promissory notes, so they don't count!"

When the other Ji Clan members heard what was being cried out, they couldn't help but be shocked. The cultivators on the outside were also looking on with wide eyes.

"I can't believe Meng Hao was so daring back then! He actually forced Ji Clan Chosen to write promissory notes!!"

"Tens of millions of spirit stones! How... how do you force someone to the point of signing that kind of promissory note?!"

Meng Hao's eyes went dark. "Not going to acknowledge your debt?!"

\*

1. In traditional Chinese culture, all males of the same generation in a family will have the same first character in their given name. In this

case, it would be logical to assume that since the first character in Ji Xueming's name is Xue, that he would be related to Ji Xuelin, who also has the character Xue. Incidentally, Madam Deathblade's family follows this tradition, so her brother and cousins all have the character Zhi 智 in their given name.

# Chapter 804: Debts Must Be Repaid!

The Ji Clan members glared furiously at Meng Hao, their eyes brimming with killing intent. For years on end, no one had ever dared to crash through the Ji Clan's gate. Well... except for a certain husband and wife.

Now, Meng Hao was the third person to do so.

"What a pack of lies!" a voice said from among the Ji Clan members. As the same time, a surge of energy burst out, accompanied by three older clan members. They moved with incredible speed, and were in front of Meng Hao in the space of one breath. Their cultivation bases emanated the shocking power of Dao Seeking, and even as they arrived in front of Meng Hao, they snorted and launched attacks.

They knew Meng Hao was extraordinary, which was why they joined forces to attack in unison. Everything trembled violently, even the sun and moon. The illusory image of an altar appeared which rumbled toward Meng Hao, exuding incredible pressure.

"For the sake of your parents, we won't kill you today, but that doesn't mean we'll let you off without teaching you a lesson!" The ground quaked as the altar descended toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's expression was calm. He smiled and glanced at the incoming altar, then suddenly clenched his fist. Even as his punch sailed through the air, the Ninth Mountain materialized, which then slammed into the altar.

A huge boom rattled out and the altar was sent spinning backward. The Ninth Mountain floated there, emanating shocking pressure, and most shocking of all, surrounded by swirling Immortal qi. The three Ji clan members staggered backward, blood oozing out of their mouths, their faces filled with shock.

In the same moment that they fell into retreat, seven more older clan members flew up into the air. They also joined forces, shoving their hands down from above to summon an enormous lake. There were fish swimming to and fro within the lake, one of which leapt out and

transformed into a red dragon that roared and headed toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao lifted his foot up and took a step forward. The ground quaked as a massive force rippled out in all directions. The three Dao Seeking experts coughed up blood and fell back once more, astonishment written on their faces.

As for the seven old clan members who had summoned the red dragon, blood sprayed from their mouths and they tumbled back through the air like kites with their strings cut.

Then there were the ordinary clan members, whose faces fell as they felt themselves being shoved back violently, their bodies completely beyond their own control. They looked over in shock at Meng Hao, who stood there, towering above everyone.

The people on the outside continued to watch with wide eyes and gaping mouths. To them, Meng Hao looked like a Paragon, standing there unmatched and invincible!

“Debts must be repaid!” Meng Hao said, walking forward again. “It’s a law of Heaven and a principle of Earth! If you renege on your debt, then I’ll just have to come take it myself.” As he advanced, the Ji Clan members were forced to fall back. It was almost like they couldn’t even control their own bodies, and were literally being forced back by an incredible power.

One of their number was a young man who suddenly felt an incredible force wrapping around his body. He was suddenly hauled out from the other Ji Clan members and pulled directly in front of Meng Hao.

It was Ji Xuelin.

“Meng Hao, you’re pushing things way too far!” he cried shrilly, glaring furiously at Meng Hao. He looked like he was about to fly into a rage, but inwardly, he was trembling. Even as the words left his mouth, he braced himself for something horrible to happen. However, he had no choice but to speak such words; after all, this was the Ji Clan, and if he didn’t say something, how could he possibly hold his head up in front of his fellow clan members?

"You owe me money, and I'm here to collect! How is that pushing things too far?"

In the face of all the nearby Ji Clan members, Meng Hao grabbed Ji Xuelin's bag of holding and opened it up. He frowned.

"You barely have more than 1,000,000 spirit stones? How could that be!?" Meng Hao's tone turned stern. "Ji Xuelin, that's simply not enough. Okay, let me see.... you owe me 7,650,000 spirit stones...." He reached out, stuck his hand into Ji Xuelin's robe and started to loosen it.

"Meng Hao! Y-y-you...." Ji Xuelin let out a roar. Meng Hao had just snatched away his bag of holding, and then taken away some of his other personal belongings. After that, shockingly, Meng Hao began to disrobe him! This caused Ji Xuelin to be frightened out of his wits, filled with unprecedeted terror and astonishment.

"Y-y-you... what are you DOING!?!?"

He wasn't the only frightened one. The other Ji Clan members looked on with wide, disbelieving eyes as Meng Hao pulled Ji Xuelin's robes off.

"You owe me money! These clothes are pretty nice. I bet I could sell them for a few spirit stones." Meng Hao put the robes away and then looked at the shivering Ji Xuelin. Finally, he heaved a sigh of pity.

"If I had known things would turn out this way," Meng Hao said, shaking his head sympathetically, "I would have done things differently back then. Ah, young people. You shouldn't write promissory notes so easily, you know? I hope that in the future, you keep that in mind. Turn over a new leaf!"

"Although, don't forget that you still have to pay me back what you owe me. This little bit today can just be considered interest."

Ji Xuelin let out a mighty roar, and then coughed up a mouthful of blood. He was so enraged that he then passed out and flopped over onto the ground, although it was hard to say whether it was real or an act....

It was at this point that a cold snort echoed through the air. A shadow passed over the mansion, and an incredibly cold aura spread out.

Boundless killing intent roiled through the air as an enormous black hand appeared up above. Rumbling pressure weighed down in all directions, transforming into the power of peak Dao Seeking. As Meng Hao looked up, the hand descended toward him.

Just barely visible behind the huge hand was an old man wearing a black robe. He was thin and emaciated, and emanated an aura of decay and rot, as if he had just climbed up from a grave.

“You don’t qualify to run amok in the Ji Clan!”

Rumbling filled Heaven and Earth, and astonishing killing intent filled the air. It seemed evil to the extreme, and caused the bright spring day to suddenly become as cold as dead winter. Black snowflakes began to flutter down, and the entire place appeared to have turned into... a midwinter battlefield.

Suddenly, countless corpses appeared on the battlefield, as well as innumerable cultivators locked in deadly combat. All of was incredibly realistic! It was... a Dao Seeking Region!

It was a peak Dao Seeking Region!

As Meng Hao stood there in the middle of the Region, his face grew dark and grim. Anyone who saw the expression found their hearts suddenly thumping. This version of Meng Hao seemed completely different, a vicious version which had been hiding inside him all along!

“Killing intent? You can’t have more than I do,” he said coolly. Suddenly, the shadow beneath his feet rippled, and his second true self emerged. At first, his eyes were closed, but as he stepped out, they opened, and blood-colored light spilled out. A killing intent radiated out that was exponentially stronger than the previous killing intent. It caused the sky to change color and the clouds to seethe. The sun and moon trembled as the intensity of the killing intent caused everything in the area to shake.

The emaciated man up in midair gasped, and his face filled with disbelief. The surrounding Ji Clan members were all shaking in astonishment, and many of them were coughing up mouthfuls of blood.

Everyone on the outside felt as if they were frozen in place by icy coldness, and were shivering violently.

This was Meng Hao's second true self, who had absorbed his boundless Devilish will!

The Devilish will was shocking; a black aura exploded out from Meng Hao's second true self, transforming into roiling black clouds that then formed into the image of an enormous face. The face was matchlessly savage, and seemed to contain a madness that wished to exterminate all forms of life.

The intense killing intent immediately exerted incredible pressure on the emaciated old man, who felt his scalp go completely numb.

"This... this...." His mind was reeling. This ferocious spirit, this killing intent, this madness... were something rarely seen in life.

Meng Hao's mood had turned sour. His voice level, he said, "As for this battlefield illusion, let me ask you... have you ever seen a real battlefield before?"

His second true self's body distorted, causing what looked like beams of light to shoot out in all directions, causing... a different battlefield to appear!

It was a battlefield of complete carnage, with rivers of blood flowing everywhere. A mountain-like giant roared, and a woman was hidden in ball of mist. Fierce fighting raged as people chose to self-detonate rather than see their home be overrun. The ground was stained bright red, and up above in the sky, peak Dao Seeking experts fought at close quarters. One of them laughed uproariously and self-detonated.

The scene was incredibly realistic, because... these were images of things that had actually occurred in the war between the Southern Domain and the Northern Reaches!

"Have you ever been on a battlefield like that?" asked Meng Hao. His second true self's eyes flickered and he took a step forward. His ferocious spirit merged with the energy of the battlefield, which then rose up into

the air to meet the descending pitch-black hand, and the emaciated old man.

A huge boom rang out as the black hand collapsed into pieces. The emaciated man coughed up blood and was flung backward. As he flew through the air, he coughed up three more mouthfuls of blood. His cultivation base dropped, and cracking sounds rang out as a life-protecting jade slip was destroyed. Without that jade slip, he would most certainly have been dead.

Everything was dead silent. The Ji Clan members were completely shaken as they stared at Meng Hao. It was the same with the cultivators on the outside.

“Now that... is Meng Hao!”

“He is a Chosen who rose to fame during the war between the Southern Domain and the Northern Reaches. He’s the number one figure of this generation in the lands of South Heaven....”

“That battlefield just now must have been images from the war....”

A sharp inhalation could be heard, followed by the image of Meng Hao shaking his head. “Couldn’t control it fully,” he said.

With that, he made a beckoning motion, and his second true self vanished, once again turning into his shadow. From what everyone watching could see, it appeared as if Meng Hao was once again calm and tranquil.

“That’s enough, you little punk!”

The next voice that echoed out was ancient and archaic. It came from deep within the Ji Clan ancestral mansion, from a location that looked very different from the beautifully decorated buildings around it. It was a thatched cottage that seemed completely ordinary in every respect. Suddenly, the cottage’s door opened, and a teenager stepped out.

He appeared to be about fifteen or sixteen, but had a full head of white hair. His expression was the type you would see on an old man; clearly, he cultivated some technique that allowed the body to reverse the effects of

aging.

As soon as he stepped out, everything in front of him trembled. Shockingly, an enormous Dharma Idol appeared behind him.

The Dharma Idol was not humanoid, but rather, was an enormous bottle gourd which was a swirl of red, blue and yellow colors. As soon as it appeared, shocking light spread out to cover over the entire fortress.

As soon as the Ji Clan cultivators saw the bottle gourd and heard the ancient voice, their spirits were lifted. Regardless of age, they all turned toward the gourd, clasped hands and bowed.

“Greetings, Patriarch Nine!”

“It’s Patriarch Nine! Greetings, Patriarch Nine!”

Simultaneously, the teenager strode forward a single step. It was as if the entire Ji Clan fortress shrunk; in the blink of an eye, he was directly in front of the crowd of Ji Clan cultivators. His hands were clasped behind his back, and his white hair floated around him as he stared icily at Meng Hao.

# Chapter 805: We'll Pay You Back!

A false Immortal!

This was a false Immortal!

The teenager made his appearance coldly, and as he stood in front of the other Ji Clan members, his eyes fell onto Meng Hao.

“Screw off!” he said. He was well aware that Meng Hao had powerful backing, and didn’t want to provoke him. However, the ancestral mansion was under his personal command. If Fang Xiufeng showed up, he wouldn’t do anything to offend him. But for a member of the junior generation to dare to act in this way filled his heart with rage.

His appearance on the scene immediately caused the surrounding Ji Clan members to grow excited. Ji Xuelin instantly “regained consciousness,” and looked excitedly at Patriarch Nine. Then he looked back at Meng Hao with anticipation regarding his imminent vengeance.

“You’re definitely going to get put in place this time!” he thought.

Meng Hao cleared his throat and looked up at the enormous bottle gourd Dharma Idol floating there.

“Dharma Idol, huh....” Meng Hao smiled. “Well I have one too.” Eyes glittering, he took a step forward. Up to this point, he hadn’t called on the full extent of his power. Now, he rotated his cultivation base, and Immortal qi emerged. As soon as it did, everything trembled and shook, and an enormous Dharma Idol appeared that seemed capable of holding up the sky.

The strength of this Dharma Idol was extraordinarily shocking; it was like some primordial giant whose face was that of Meng Hao!

The sky shook and the ground quaked the moment the Dharma Idol appeared; natural law spread out, along with a vast pressure that weighed down on everything. The bottle gourd began to quiver, and it seemed to be expending all of its energy as it struggled to fight back against Meng Hao’s Dharma Idol.

The sky looked like it was on the verge of being torn to shreds, and ear-shattering booms filled the air. The incredible pressure seemed capable of tearing Heaven and Earth apart from each other, and the land looked as if it were about to shatter into pieces.

Almost instantly, Meng Hao and the teenager were in a deadlock!

The Ji Clan members looked on, panting, their expressions blank. Their scalps were numb and their minds reeled. They knew that Meng Hao was strong, but... how could they ever have imagined that... he would be this strong!?

He could even fight Patriarch Nine to a standstill. And their Patriarch Nine... was an Immortal!!

The teenager's face sank, and a strange light appeared in his eyes as he looked at Meng Hao. Inwardly, he let out a long sigh. He had known before that Meng Hao was extraordinary, but it wasn't until he actually faced up against him that he realized... he had underestimated him.

"So it's true that he's actually... half a step into true Immortality!"

By now, the nearby cultivators had spread the news that Meng Hao had charged into the Ji Clan fortress. The news reached other sects, and soon all of the powerful experts of the Eastern Lands knew. Divine sense streamed forth, and gasps could be heard in the various sects throughout the Eastern Lands when they saw that Meng Hao could grapple with a false Immortal.

"This Meng Hao is incredible!"

"His father is extraordinary, and... so is he!"

"The Fang Clan...."

Countless eyes throughout the Eastern Lands were now fixed on the Ji Clan, and Meng Hao. Meng Hao's eyes blazed with the desire to do battle; ever since his incredible cultivation base breakthrough, he had not battled a false Immortal. He truly wished to know how such a battle would turn out!

He reached out his hand and pointed toward the teenager, and his desire to fight was clear.

“Make your move!” he said.

The Ji Clan cultivators were panting, especially those who normally flaunted their status as Chosen. Their faces were pale, and they were forced to admit that there was now a vast, unimaginable gap between themselves and Meng Hao. It was like the difference between Heaven and Earth, and was a chasm that could not easily be crossed.

“He... is so much stronger than us!!”

“It’s laughable to say that we are of the same generation. We can shake things up, but he... he can battle with our Patriarch!”

“We... don’t even qualify to be his opponent....” This fact was quite a blow to the Chosen. Earlier, they had heard about Meng Hao’s strength, but to witness it with their own eyes was shocking to the soul.

As he faced up against a bristling Meng Hao, Patriarch Nine realized that he was in somewhat of a dilemma. As the saying goes, if you ride a tiger, it’s hard to get off. Even as he hesitated, an archaic voice suddenly rang out from thin air to fill the Ji clan.

“The Ji Clan cultivates Karma. Spirit stones are material objects, and can be considered a seed of Karma. The Ji Clan must not be infected by such Karma. Anyone who owes this person spirit stones must pay them back!

“All of you, pay heed. The Ji Clan’s cultivation is different than that of the masses. To cultivate Karma, we must revere Karma. If you do not have the power to sever Karma, then you must yield to it!

“Give it to him! Him coming here to ask for his spirit stones is in fact an aid to you in severing Karma with him. Do you still not understand? Once the Karma is severed, your cultivation will surely flourish.”

As these few sentences reverberated through the air, the voice vanished. Patriarch Nine’s body jerked to a stop as he realized that the voice had come from the true Patriarch of the Ji Clan here in the Eastern Lands. His energy immediately dissipated along with the Dharma Idol, and he clasped

hands and bowed to Meng Hao.

"Many thanks for the assistance you have provided to these children of the Ji Clan in severing Karma, my young friend. Please inform me of exactly how many spirit stones are owed, and I will give them to you."

There were many people who appeared to be enlightened, and not just members of the Ji Clan. As for the handful of Chosen who owned spirit stones to Meng Hao, their bodies trembled as brilliant Dao light shone out from them. What seemed to be the music of a great Dao swirled around them, as if in this moment, their Dao heart was nudged forward.

Meng Hao gaped in shock at this sudden reversal. That was especially so when he saw that the Dao light shining off of Ji Xuelin had intensified. From the look of it, he was experiencing a cultivation base breakthrough, which caused Meng Hao to breathe deeply.

"I can't believe the Ji Clan's magic is so Heaven-defying!" he thought.  
"Cultivate Karma, revere Karma, sever Karma...."

He watched wide-eyed as Ji Xuelin suddenly clasped hands and bowed to him.

"Elder Brother Meng, many thanks for helping me to sever the Karma from that year."

The Chosen who owed Meng Hao spirit stones immediately began to clasp hands toward him and bow in thanks.

"Many thanks, Elder Brother Meng!"

"Many thanks, Fellow Daoist Meng Hao!"

Meng Hao abruptly took a few steps back. He was actually a bit angry. He had merely come here to collect some debts; how could it have ended with him helping them?

"Who was that old geezer who was talking just now?" he thought, frowning. "He's so powerful! With just a few words, not only was he able to settle the dispute, he provided his clan members with good fortune AND turned me into the grindstone to help them polish their

understanding of severing Karma.

“Dammit!” Meng Hao was just about to leave when Patriarch Nine hurried forward, smiling.

“Young friend, what are you doing?” he asked. “How many spirit stones do they owe you? Tell me and I’ll hand them over to you.”

“Uhh, no, that’s fine,” Meng Hao said hastily. “All of us are actually good friends, and I was just pulling a little prank. Let’s leave the debt in place, alright? I’m... I’m in no hurry.” By this point, he was already back at the huge gate.

“No, that won’t do,” said the youthful-looking Patriarch Nine. “There’s no need to say anything more, young friend. You’re being too magnanimous.” He turned to the Chosen. “All of you, tell me how much you owe. And tell me how much Xiaoxiao and the other two owe, too.” Patriarch Nine had also been somewhat enlightened now. He knew that to sever a Karma infection was something of great importance to these Chosen.

To Ji Xuelin and the others, it was clear that great fortune had just arrived. Having just been enlightened about such a great truth, they immediately responded.

“7,650,000!”

“9,180,000!”

“14... 14,000,000!”

“8,330,000!”

“Altogether, Xiaoxiao and the other two probably don’t owe more than 30,000,000....”

When the youthful-looking Patriarch Nine heard how many spirit stones were involved, he stared in shock, then looked deeply at Meng Hao.

“Young friend, you really are very magnanimous. In the future, you’ll surely be incredibly rich.”

“You’re too kind, really,” said Meng Hao clearing his throat, and backing

up. "Since Ji Xiaoxiao and the other two aren't here, they can't return what they owe personally and it doesn't count as them settling the debt." As far as he was concerned, these people from the Ji Clan were a bunch of lunatics. Who would possibly offer to pay back so many spirit stones? If he owed so many spirit stones to someone, he sure wouldn't pay them back, even if he were beaten to death!

"Really," he said, "there's no need to be hasty. How about this... you people get back to what you were doing. My dad asked me to help out around the house, so I'll head home now...." By this point he was outside the main gate. However, just as he was about to leave, a bag of holding flew out and landed in his hand.

"Inside that bag are all the spirit stones owed to you from the people here. As of now, they have no Karma connected to you."

There was a booming sound as the Ji Clan's main gate slammed shut.

Meng Hao chuckled bitterly. The promissory notes in his bag of holding instantly turned to ash. Luckily... there were still three remaining, the ones belonging to Ji Xiaoxiao and the others. Since they weren't here, they wouldn't be able to resolve their Karma.

Meng Hao had his money, but was actually a bit depressed. Of course, what he didn't know was that his matter of collecting his debts had actually shaken the entire Eastern Lands. Countless gazes were being cast in his direction at that very moment.

He looked at the Ji Clan's main gate, then recalled the iron hoops in his bag of holding. He hesitated for a moment.

"Fudge, who cares about all that crap he said about Karma!? I'm keeping the iron hoops!" With that, he turned, clasped hands to the surrounding cultivators, then turned into a beam of prismatic light that shot off into the distance.

He moved with such speed that in the blink of an eye, no trace of him remained. He reappeared far off in the distance, in the sky above the Eastern Lands. He sent some divine sense out to make sure that no one was watching him, and then his expression darkened.

After a long moment, his eyes flickered.

"I think that in the future, I should get more people to write promissory notes. Getting them to personally write the notes... is Karma....

"Interesting. Perhaps these promissory notes will be of some use in the future!" Eyes glittering, Meng hao was just about to allow the Immortal Ancient Dao Medallion to guide him to the Daoist rite temple when suddenly, he stopped in place.

"If I remember correctly... I still owe money to some people too.... I owe Steward Zhou three pieces of silver...." When he considered the matter, something about it didn't seem right.

"But when went looking for him before, Steward Zhou was already dead. Should I go find his descendants? Agh! That damned Patriarch Reliance has the State of Zhao on his back. And he left the lands of South Heaven! How... how am I supposed to settle that Karma!" After a moment, he smiled bitterly.

Shaking his head, he sighed, then sent some divine sense into the Immortal Ancient Dao Medallion. Following its guidance, he headed off into the distance.

Several days later, Meng Hao appeared at the edge of a boundless mountain range in the depths of the Eastern Lands. He then vanished as he entered the mountains. As he proceeded along, he saw no signs of life. He passed many treacherous locations, and faced quite a few dangers.

As he traveled further into the mountains, the air up above became restricted, and eruptions of black mist would occur frequently. Despite Meng Hao's incredibly powerful fleshly body, he could still be injured by that black mist, which filled his heart with trepidation after it happened a few times.

"They don't seem like restrictive spells," he thought. "Could it be that somebody buried something here? Whatever they are, they're incredibly dangerous!" After some careful examination, Meng Hao was certain that there were items buried beneath the ground that would explode if stepped on.

There were also naturally occurring restrictive spells which, if he got caught in their explosions, would certainly cause his cultivation base to drop.

Thankfully, the Immortal Ancient Dao Medallion was very effective in avoiding both the restrictive spells and the objects buried underground. Using the medallion's guidance, he was able to proceed onward for several days with no incident. Finally, he found himself on a narrow path which cut deep through the mountains in such a way that he could only see a sliver of the sky up above. This path also was laced with the buried, explosive objects. Thankfully, by means of the medallion, and utmost caution, he was able to proceed along the path for some time without incident. Three times, eruptions occurred, but in the end, he finally found himself... in front of a run-down old temple.

# Chapter 806: The Wind Stirs in the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

Twenty days earlier on Planet South Heaven, Meng Hao's father had slashed out with his sword, causing sword qi to descend on the Eastern Lands. It had pierced into a mountain range, to a dilapidated old temple, whereupon the illusory images of a Daoist rite temple had appeared. The whole thing had been unsealed by Meng Hao's father.

When such a thing happened, it was only the beginning. The invisible ripples that spread out were very difficult to conceal, and in fact made their way from Planet South Heaven out into the starry sky, whereupon many almighty figures sensed them.

On Planet East Victory, about half of the entire planet belonged to the Fang Clan. Actually, if the Fang Clan wished it, they could easily take control of the entire planet.

When the invisible ripples spread out from the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple on Planet South Heaven, an ancient voice floated out from inside of an archaic temple on Planet East Victory.

"So, another Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple has been unsealed... and in the lands of South Heaven.... Have the Array Chosen of the clan go to acquire good fortune.... Fang Xiangshan. Fang Yunyi. Fang Donghan. You three have a predestined connection to go seek your fortunes there. Your clan uncle Fang Xiufeng is there on South Heaven, so he might be able to provide you with some assistance."

"As for the other clan disciples, although you might not have the destiny, if you wish to go... you may." The voice echoed out throughout the entire planet, and in response, incredible energy surged up from three specific locations. One such location was a lake, on the surface of which was a solitary boat. Sitting cross-legged in the boat was a woman wearing white garments, who seemed graceful in an otherworldly way. Her long, lustrous hair fell like a cape down her back, and she seemed ethereal, beyond that which was mortal. On either side of her were two indistinct figures, guards

who were there to protect her at all times.

The woman's eyelashes fluttered as her eyes opened.

"If this is your order, Patriarch, then Xiang'er will definitely make the trip."

In another location was a wild stretch of mountains that was constantly filled by roars of wild beasts so shocking they seemed capable of ripping the sky apart. This place was actually referred to as a restricted area, and was incredibly dangerous. Standing there in the mountains was a young, bare-chested young man currently locked in deadly combat with a gigantic ape that glowed with glittering, golden light. The ape roared, and shockingly, a Dharma Idol appeared. However, the vicious young man still managed to rip the ape in half, showering himself with copious amounts of blood.

"Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple?" said the young man. "That means that an Immortal Ancient Daoist Medallion will certainly appear! Fang Wei is out training and won't be back any time soon. This good fortune will certainly fall to me, Fang Donghan!" The young man drank a huge mouthful of ape blood then rose to his feet. Two beautiful women materialized, not with physical bodies, but with spirit bodies. Any worldly-wise person would know at a single glance that these were Wind Spirit bodies, something that only members of the Wind Spirit people could possess. Few members of their people existed like this; only a handful would be born in any given generation that were suitable to cultivate this type of Wind magic.

The two women picked up a cloak, which they draped over the young man.

The third location was an enormous basin filled with countless chunks of broken stone. These were no ordinary stones; each and every one came from outside in the starry sky, and had fallen to this place as meteors.

As a result, the basin was filled with incredible pressure, and any cultivator inside would find it hard to even take just a few steps. When inside, it felt as if one's entire body were bound tightly, and if you

managed to force yourself to be able to walk, your body might explode.

Currently, a young man could be seen sitting cross-legged in the depths of the basin. He had no hair, and wore golden clothing. Cracking sounds could be heard ringing out from inside of him; his fleshly body was powerful to the extreme. In fact, he could rely on that power alone to resist the shocking pressure that surrounded him.

After a few moments passed, he opened his eyes. Within each of his eyes was the image of what appeared to be a planet, bizarre and strange.

"Interesting. An Immortal Ancient Dao Medallion.... If I could acquire that and give it to Goddess Zhixiang, it would probably improve her impression of me." The bald young man smiled and rose to his feet. He walked out of the basin, where he was met by two old men who stood guard at his side.

In addition to these three people, there were more than ten others from Planet East Victory who chose to compete for this particular opportunity.

Meanwhile, a slender young man stood in the middle of a desert on Planet West Felicity 1. He wore a green robe which swayed in the wind, and the sword strapped to his back emanated a monstrous sword aura that caused the desert around him to seem like a lake of swords. The music of a Dao floated in the air, and the entire area seemed like a Holy Land. As he stood there, he appeared to be respectfully listening to someone. After a moment, a brilliant glow appeared in his eyes.

"Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple.... I have the strange feeling that if I don't go, I'll regret it. In that case... I'll just have to go check it out." He smiled faintly, then transformed into a sword beam that shot off into the distance.

In another location on Planet West Felicity, a veiled woman sat cross-legged on a mountain peak. Demonic qi swirled about, causing wind and thunder to roll through the air. The woman's eyes were closed, and her aura seemed Demonic, and yet not; Immortal, and yet not.

"Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple," she murmured softly, her voice mesmerizing and charming. "The Southern Domain...." She smiled as she

seemed to visualize the image of a young man.

"Ah, why not go and see some old friends?" she said. "I wonder if that little punk succeeded in Spirit Severing."

At the same time, on Planet North Reed, a shocking scene was playing out.

The Li Clan of the Southern Domain had merely been a collateral branch. The real Li Clan was extremely famous in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Currently, a massive airship was flying out of the Li Clan. It was fully 30,000 meters long, and at the front of the ship stood ten clan members, who looked out as the ship shot through the starry sky.

One of those clan members was an icily arrogant woman who sat ramrod straight at the head of the group. Moonlight flickered in her eyes, and the mark of a willow leaf could be seen on her forehead. Her expression was as cold as freezing ice.

"The Immortal Ancient Dao Medallion must be mine!"

There were two other locations on Planet North Reed where similarly shocking sights could be seen. In one location, an old man suddenly materialized outside the mouth of an enormous volcano. He clasped hands and bowed deeply.

"Young Lord Luodan, the Patriarch has issued a command. He wants you to lead some people to Planet South Heaven. An Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple has been activated. He wants you to go do your best to seize the good fortune."

Rumble!

A flame-cloaked figure strode out from inside the volcano. He stopped in front of the old man, whereupon the flames that surrounded him merged together to form a flame crow that perched on his shoulder.

He was a tall, strapping young man with a scar that ran from his forehead all the way down to his neck, giving him a thoroughly fearsome appearance. His garments were composed of magical flame symbols, merged together into robes.

"I understand," he said coolly, then made his way off into the distance.

In another location was a pitch-black bamboo forest, within which lurked numerous recently deceased souls that flew back and forth wildly. A young man sat cross-legged on a bamboo stem. He was handsome, with eyebrows like swords and eyes like stars. His eyes shone brightly as he looked over at another nearby bamboo stem.

On that other piece of bamboo was an old man who looked like a monkey. He was staring at the young man with arrogance and contempt, and the young man was staring back at him.

"You're coming with me!" the young man said.

"Like hell I am!" the old man replied with arrogant disdain. "Your Grandpa Xu has been famous for years. You think I'm going to go around with a wimpy little brat like yourself? Scram! If I was like the old me, I would already have beaten the crap out of you!"

"I'll remind you I'm surnamed Wang!" the young man through gritted teeth said.

"Wang Shmong! You bastard!" the old man said impatiently. He waved his hand, sending the young man flailing backward, blood spraying from his mouth.

When he rose to his feet, a ghost flitted over, came to a stop next to the young man, and whispered in his ear. The young man's eyes flickered with irritation.

"You just wait, you crotchety scoundrel! After your Young Master gets the Immortal Ancient Dao Medallion, I'm gonna come back here and boil you to death! You belong to me!"

"SCREW OFF!" echoed the old man's impatient voice. "Listen to Grandpa Xu and screw the hell off!"

The unsealing of South Heaven's Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple sent great waves crashing throughout the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea. In addition to the super planets, there were many other smaller powers who detected the matter. Orders were issued, sending the disciples of

many sects to Planet South Heaven to fight for good fortune.

Even the Ji Clan of the Ninth Mountain was sent into motion. Their clan was located on the peak of the Ninth Mountain, where they ruled over all of the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

Inside the Ji Clan, several figures approached a teleportation portal. One of them was a tall, slender man who was surrounded by boundless, swirling Karma. It was difficult to clearly make out his features, but the other Ji Clan members backed up as he neared, expressions of reverence and fanaticism on their faces.

He said nothing as he entered the teleportation portal and sat down cross-legged. When he closed his eyes, boundless Karma surged around him, transforming into thin strands that glowed with brilliant light when they touched each other. Everyone who looked at the scene was dazzled, and felt as if their souls were being tugged over, completely beyond their control.

“This Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple was activated when the Son of Ji is in secluded meditation and can’t emerge. I never thought that Ji Yin would chose to go!” 2

“The year when those three fought over the title of Son of Ji, the Heavens and Earth fell into darkness. Even the sun and moon trembled. The whole Ninth Mountain and Sea was shaken and countless people looked on.... In the end, Ji Yin was defeated, and yet, he is still so powerful that he is viewed as a major rival by the Chosen of the Three Churches and Six Sects, the Three Great Clans, and the Five Great Holy Lands.”

“In this generation... not many could stand up to people like him. Although, I heard that in the Fang Clan there’s someone named Prince Wei who beat Ji Yin in a fight once. I’m not sure if that’s a true story though....”

The whole Ninth Mountain and Sea was in a stir. Countless sects and clans were spurred into motion and sent Chosen disciples toward the lands of the South Heaven, to try to acquire good fortune in the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple.

Even the Ninth Sea, which was located between the Ninth Mountain and the Eighth Mountain, was included in the commotion. You could say that it was a sea, but actually, it was composed of countless fragments of heavenly bodies that emanated spiritual energy, which then turned into a sea of mist.

Rumbling could be heard within that starry sea as an enormous door rose up. As the door appeared above the surface of the sea, countless sea dragons flew out. Trembling, they prostrated themselves in front of the door, which emanated a boundless light, as well as the music of a great Dao. It almost seemed like countless Immortal Divinities were sitting cross-legged in meditation surrounding the door. The energy was completely shocking.

Slowly, the door opened, giving view to an entire world.

A woman walked out from that world. She had long hair that stretched all the way to her calves. She was incredibly beautiful, as if all the charm in Heaven and Earth were collected on her person. She emanated the air of an orchid as she waved her hand, causing the door to close behind her and then sink back down to the bottom of the sea.

“Currently, the Three Great Daoist Societies’ Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite only has four Conclave disciples,” murmured the woman. “That’s one less than my Ninth Sea God World. I can’t let that daoist medallion fall into anyone else’s hands.” She took a step forward, and a roaring sea dragon flew out obediently beneath her feet, then carried her off into the distance at top speed.

In the great Ninth Mountain and Sea, the ancient Fang Clan, the Three Great Clans, the Three Great Daoist Societies, the Five Great Holy Lands, the Three Churches and Six Sects... were all mobilized into action. A vast group of Chosen were all heading toward Planet South Heaven.

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Note from Deathblade: Wow, there were a lot of characters introduced in this chapter, few of whom were named. Don’t worry, when they appear again later, I will link back to this chapter and provide some reminders

about who they are!

\*

1. When the four planets were originally mentioned in chapter 407, this one was called “West Ox.” Obviously Er Gen opted to change the name.
2. This “Yin” is the same yin from yin-yang, which connotes aspects such as the moon, darkness, hidden things, female thing, negative things.

# Chapter 807: Ancient Immortal Daoist Rite Temple!

Planet South Heaven. The vast Eastern Lands.

In the middle of a seemingly endless range of mountains was an area that was considered a forbidden zone by Eastern Lands cultivators. Even Dao Seeking cultivators who entered it would never come back out. According to rumor, there were fearsome entities inside that stopped countless explorers in their tracks and made it so that no one dared to ever enter.

Even a Patriarch of the Ji Clan had on one occasion led a group in to search for the Karma within. However, the entire force was completely wiped out except for the Patriarch, who fled back to warn the Eastern Lands' Ji Clan to never again set foot inside the area.

Actually, that Patriarch still resided in the Ji Clan. He was the peak Immortal Realm young man who had just recently lost his arms!

Even he was incapable of penetrating the depths of the mountain range. En route, his force was completely rocked by the restrictive spells. This place was a mystery relating to the lands of South Heaven, and as such, the Ji Clan Patriarch did not report the matter to his superiors. He knew that... there were far too many terrifying aspects to the place.

He never attempted to enter the place again. As far as he was concerned, the only way to do so was by use of incredibly powerful clan treasures. Without such treasures, it was simply impossible.

However, such powerful clan treasures were few and far between. Furthermore, considering his status in the clan, it didn't matter that he was in charge of the forces on Planet South Heaven. He still did not have access to such things. The Immortality Bestowal Dais was one such treasure, but it possessed its own consciousness and was not something that he could wield by means of force. Other treasures... were only bestowed upon Chosen disciples of the clan.

No one really understood why Planet South Heaven was so unique. There was actually no single power that held complete sway. Even the Ji Clan's dominant position was maintained only by the threat of their clan's military might. It was a sharp contrast to Planet East Victory, where the Fang Clan occupied half of the planet, and yet could easily take over the entire planet if they wished.

In the lands of South Heaven, there were four main areas, each with their own core Daoist teachings and doctrines. If one investigated the matter, it became obvious that... most of the sects on South Heaven did not actually originate there. The majority were auxiliary branches of sects that existed outside the lands of South Heaven.

It was as if most major powers wished to leave some of their core Daoist teachings and doctrines behind there.

Furthermore, it was in the lands of South Heaven that Meng Hao's father had become the Prison Warden of the Ninth Mountain. At first, the word "Prison" seemed to explain a lot....

And yet, when Meng Hao asked about it, his father told him that the word "Prison" actually didn't carry the usual meaning of the word!

Regarding the particulars, he offered no further explanation. His expression was vague, as if he himself felt that the truth was so unbelievable that it caused him to be at a loss for words.

In any case, the lands of South Heaven... were completely unique!

Meng Hao had transcended his Seventh Year Tribulation there, and the League of Demon Sealers had also passed down their legacy there. Patriarch Blood Demon had hidden there when the ancient Demon Immortal Sect was destroyed. Even more unbelievable to Meng Hao was that... there was a mighty mortal empire, the Great Tang!

Meng Hao was even more astonished when he thought about the Tang emperor.

One thing that Meng Hao was very perplexed about was the area beneath the Ancient Dao Lakes, where he had participated in the trial by

fire and heard the Overseer mention an ancient treaty. And there was... the terrifying experience of the final level.

### The Essence of the Divine Flame!

All of it left Meng Hao feeling quite at a loss. Now, here he was, having followed the guidance of the Immortal Ancient Dao Medallion to this place deep in the mountains. When he caught sight of that ancient temple, his heart trembled.

That was because, all of a sudden, his vision swam and he saw a completely different and unbelievable place.

It was a majestic Daoist rite temple that stretched seemingly without end. Mountain peaks, vegetation, everything around him vanished. He now stood on the green limestone-paved main square of that enormous temple.

Countless figures sat cross-legged around him, and each was so powerful that Meng Hao couldn't help but gasp. They seemed like innumerable Immortal Divinities sitting there in meditation. The music of great Daos floated around in all directions, and the sun and moon trembled in the sky as if here, in this place, they were incapable of emitting any light.

In the middle of the Daoist rite temple was an altar, upon which an old man sat cross-legged. He exuded the air of a transcendent being, and a faint smile could be seen on his lips as he gave a sermon on the Dao. His voice was muffled and indistinct and seemed to harmonize with and meld into Heaven and Earth. Meng Hao couldn't quite make out what he was saying, but he could see that many of the people who were listening to his sermon seemed to be gaining enlightenment.

It was at this point that the old man lifted his right hand up into the air, waved it about... and caused an enormous "Immortal 仙" character to appear!

It was was an azure "Immortal 仙" character!

It was simply a character, and yet it caused all the colors in Heaven and

Earth to fade. The sun and moon dimmed, and Heaven and Earth seemed to prostrate themselves in worship to it in much the same way that people would.

Meng Hao trembled as he looked around at the terrifying world around him. Each green slab of limestone beneath his feet seemed to emanate an indescribable energy filled with Immortal qi. The intensity of that Immortal qi was difficult to even comprehend.

Also visible in the Daoist rite temple were nine gigantic cauldrons scattered about in different locations. Puffs of green smoke wafted out of them, and numerous worlds could be seen inside the smoke as it swirled up into the air.

Up in the sky... were heavenly bodies. A river of stars flowed; the sun and moon rose and fell. Even more unbelievable was that almighty figures could be seen flying about up in the sky. Occasionally, they would stretch out a hand and pluck a star out of the river of stars! It would then be refined by a massive illusory hand. When the hand returned to its owner, the star would be a glittering treasure in that person's palm!

There were other people who stamped their feet onto the ground, causing massive rifts to appear. Subterranean fire would rise up and transform into living creatures which resembled Earth spirits. The cultivators would snatch them up and then use them to pull war chariots that screamed through the sky, chariots to which were harnessed thousands of Earth spirits.

There was one man up in the sky who laughed heartily then spoke a few words. Popping sounds could be heard as his body grew rapidly. In the blink of an eye, he was so large that you couldn't even see his entire body. The only thing that could be seen... was a toe that seemed to fill the entire world as far as the eye could see!

As for how large his body was, it was impossible to even imagine.

Flying about and plucking stars!

Refining spirits from the depths of the Earth!

Rising up to shoulder the universe!

All of these images swirled together in Meng Hao's eyes, finally merging into one... into a dilapidated temple.

The temple's main door was shut, and the grounds were in a state of complete disrepair. Portions of the outer wall were collapsed, making it so that you wouldn't even need to pass through the gate as there were "entrances" all around. Through these gaps the inner temple hall could be seen, where there should have been glorious statues of deities. Presently, though, all of the statues were in various states of disintegration. Their former glory now existed only in the praises uttered by later generations, and their eternal legends had long since crumbled into a void of nothingness.

There was a bronze oil lamp, covered in layers of rust that told the story of its ancientness. Oil burned within the lamp, emanating faint popping sounds. Lamplight shone out in all directions, within which could be seen the projections of numerous shadowy figures.

Other than that, everything was completely still and silent.

A well could be seen in the courtyard, the bottom of which was pitch black. Perhaps evil spirits lurked there, but it was impossible to tell. However, a single glance at the well would leave anyone scared stiff. Next to the well was a bamboo trellis, covered with dried-up vines. From the look of it, a grapevine had grown up to cover the bamboo trellis many, many years ago, providing a shady and cool place to rest one's head.

Underneath the bamboo trellis were some dried up white flowers, which were completely unremarkable in appearance.

Meng Hao stood there quietly. Everything he had seen amidst the silence suddenly caused his scalp to grow numb. Were it not for the fact that his father had instructed him to come here, he would immediately turn around and get as far away from this place as possible.

His heart trembled, and although he felt no pressure weighing down him, he found it difficult to breathe. There was no visible danger, yet he felt an unprecedented sense of crisis in his heart.

Everything about this place was completely bizarre!

Why was there a temple in these mountains? Clearly the temple was not in harmony with its surroundings; it was as if it had flown here from some distant place in some age long past.

Meng Hao took a breath, steeling himself, and then stepped forward. After only walking a few steps, he suddenly heard the sound of weeping. It was woman, choked with sobs, the sound of which caused Meng Hao's hair to stand on end as it floated past. His cultivation base surged with power, and he whipped his head around to look behind him. However, he saw nothing strange.

There wasn't even a wind blowing....

After a moment's silence, his eyes flickered and he slapped his bag of holding. Instantly, the Immortal Ancient Dao Medallion appeared in his hand. Meng Hao wasn't sure whether or not it was specifically because of the medallion, but now, the place didn't seem as cold and sinister as it had.

He carefully proceeded forward until he was in front of the main gate. The strangeness of this place made him feel that it would be best not to jump over the wall or find alternate routes to enter. The best way to go in... would be the straightforward and above-board way.

He waved his sleeve, pushing the door of the temple open.

He had assumed the door would actually be difficult to open, but it wasn't. It creaked open, revealing the courtyard, the main temple hall, and the well.

A cold wind blew, making it seem as if something was walking past him. Meng Hao's face flickered as the feeling grew stronger. He circulated the Immortal qi inside his body, focusing it on his right eyes. After blinking several times, he looked around.

There was nothing except for ruins.

Meng Hao chuckled bitterly.

“Dad, what the hell kind of place did you send me to...?”

He took a deep breath and then stepped inside. Overall, the temple wasn't very large, nor was the courtyard. Meng Hao glanced over at the well, and couldn't shake the feeling that there was something very strange about it. He studied the bamboo trellis for a moment, and was just about to walk further into the courtyard when suddenly his scalp vibrated. He stopped in place and jerked his head to look back at the bamboo trellis. Panting, he walked over to the trellis and looked closely at the dried up little flowers beneath it. He couldn't prevent a look of astonishment from appearing on his face.

“These.... These are... Resurrection Lilies!” Meng Hao was more than familiar with Resurrection Lilies and was completely astonished to find that... all of the little flowers were Resurrection Lilies!

However, these Resurrection Lilies... were apparently just garden-variety flowers in this place. The scene caused him to breathe heavily; this place really was... completely veiled in mystery.

Currently, the sky was darkening as evening fell. Meng Hao hesitated for a moment as he looked around at the dilapidated statues of deities, and the dust that covered everything. Even the prayer mats that could be seen were old and worn out, but after a moment of thought, he knelt down on one of them and began to offer worship to one of the broken statues.

“Bless and protect me, Divine Immortal. Bless and protect me, Divine Immortal....” After murmuring his worship, Meng Hao felt as if the sinister air around him had again faded a bit. Apparently his prayers were effective. As he rose to his feet, a wind blew, and the lamplight flickered. Dust was lifted up from the ground, causing Meng Hao's eyes to narrow. Now that some of the dust had been moved, he could see that the ground... had an enormous character carved into it!

Immortal 仙!

It was the same character he had seen in the vision he had experienced moments ago, when the old man had waved his hand.

It looked completely identical!

When he saw the character, a crude and ancient aura blasted against his face, almost as if someone was whispering something to him. It almost sounded like someone giving a sermon about the Dao, an archaic voice echoing out from ancient times.

However, Meng Hao's heart lightened at the thought of his good luck. He sat down cross-legged and retrieved the Immortal Ancient Dao Medallion, then focused all of his attention on the character.

\*

Note from Deathblade: I want to thank the team for all the hard work cleaning up this chapter, especially anonpuffs, who really helped me fix some of the major problems. I'm pretty proud of this final product, but I wasn't happy with my initial translation. In fact, I included a note to the team, which they requested that I share with you. Here it is:

A) I think it's the hardest chapter I've ever translated

B) I think the translation probably sucks

C) Chapters often have a WTF moment or two. This chapter is essentially a string of boundless WTF moments that shake Heaven and Earth, cause the sky to dim, and the land to quake. After reading it, my scalp went numb and my eyes were filled with a look of unprecedented disbelief. I coughed up seven or eight mouthfuls of blood as I thought about the chapter that seemingly contained many truths, as if the emanations of countless Daos floated through the void to the ether of another world that exists in my eyes, like the shining of nine suns in a land of shadows and leaves, thoughtless and yet brimming with a life that seems to surge with apparent realism that is in fact false, and yet true.

Thanks, too, to Azusky, who made memes for every single chapter, even though I let him off the hook and told him he only had to make one. I also added one, so quite the gallery awaits you in the sneak peek chapter!

# Chapter 808: Projections Passing Down Daos!

It was difficult to say how much time passed. It seemed both long and short. Outside, the sky gradually darkened, and faint moonlight spread out into the blackness.

Under the darkness of night, the flame in the bronze oil lamp danced back and forth, and it almost seemed as if the shadow of a person existed in the wick, looking up at the moon....

Shadows began to appear inside the temple, revealed by the lamplight. As the lamp's flame danced, the shadows seemed to sway back and forth gracefully.

Meng Hao didn't realize it, but the color of his garments were fading into a gray color, and were actually becoming tattered. It was as if his clothes were passing through time, becoming ancient even as he sat there cross-legged.

His whole person exuded this same feeling, as if his soul were being transported back through time to the ancient Daoist rite temple, to listen the music of the Dao. At the same time, the effects to his soul spread to his body, causing it to become ancient.

Deep night....

Suddenly, the sound of weeping floated out. It drifted out through the night air, clear and vivid. As the weeping echoed about, it gradually transformed into faint sighing.

"Do Immortals still exist in this world...?" asked a voice. Then there was silence, broken only by the rustling of the leaves in the trees.

At the same time, wisps of smoke began to rise up from the well. If there were someone standing next to the well, they would surely be shocked to find that it was filled with countless long strands of hair!

The black hair swirled out from within the well and then sank to the

ground, where they spread out quickly to fill the entirety of the courtyard. It was at this point that cracking sounds could be heard coming from the bamboo trellis.

A dried up vine sagged down, making an arc-like shape that almost resembled a swing. It began to rock back and forth, almost as if... there were a person sitting on the vine, using it as a swing!

The sound of wailing drifted out from within the well, and laughter could be heard from the swing. They mixed together to fill the courtyard with an eerie sense of bizarre ness. As for Meng Hao, he sat there in the courtyard, eyes closed, completely motionless.

He was surrounded by the flickering lamplight and the shadowy projections it revealed. The projections distorted and rippled, and then began to move, walking to and fro in the courtyard. Some sat down cross-legged, some prostrated themselves in worship. Some concocted medicinal pills, some held brooms in their hands that they used to sweep the floor. Some of them even approached the area where Meng Hao sat and peered at him curiously.

As for the dilapidated statue of the god, it now stood tall and straight like it had in the past. The statue's shadow, which stretched out beneath it, suddenly separated from the statue and transformed into an old man.

The old man's clothing looked very similar to Meng Hao's long, worn-out robe. The man's face was ashen, and blood oozed out from his eyes, ears, nose and mouth; severe injuries could be seen on his head. He looked like an evil spirit as he approached Meng Hao. It was impossible to tell what he was thinking as he floated to a position behind him, where he stood and looked down at the top of Meng Hao's head.

A moment later, all of the projections within the courtyard turned and looked at Meng Hao. They approached, crowding around to stare at him closely.

Up above in the sky, black clouds covered half of the moon, and a soft wind blew across the land, along with an intermittent wail that sounded like mournful, choked sobbing.

It was at this point that the ground trembled, and muffled moaning sounds could be heard coming from deep within the temple.

"Home.... This place isn't my home.... I want to go home....

"Take me home.... Take me home, Paragon... take me home...."

When the voice drifted out, the projections in the temple all trembled. In the temple's courtyard, the black hair spreading out from the well suddenly flew up into the air. The swinging vine suddenly stopped moving.

At the same time, a head emerged from the well. It was illusory and pallid, and the expression on its face was incredibly terrifying and ferocious. Apparently this was... a head that had been soaking in the well's water for millions of years, and yet had not decomposed. It was the head of a woman, whose listless, pupil-less eyes stared at the ground.

No figure was visible on the swing, and yet drops of black blood dropped down onto the ground beneath it.

It was at this point that a tremor ran through Meng Hao's body. A hair-raising sense of terror filled him, and he opened his eyes. When he looked up, his scalp went numb as he realized that a pitch-black figure was standing directly in front of him.

In fact, he was completely surrounded by shadowy projections, all of whom appeared to be on the verge of touching him. His mind was sent completely spinning.

The shades seemed to know that Meng Hao had awakened, and they floated backward and then sat down cross-legged some distance away from him. Meng Hao could clearly see all of the projections, as well as the black hair in the courtyard. He saw the swinging vine, and the floating head. Feeling more creeped out than ever, he slowly rose to his feet to leave the temple.

He was filled with the feeling... that this place wasn't somewhere he should continue loitering about in.

As he stood, he suddenly felt a coldness behind him. Without thinking about it, he turned his head and caught sight of an ancient face only an

inch away from his own, blood flowing out of its eyes, ears, nose and mouth. Completely startled, Meng Hao staggered backward a few steps, his eyes widening.

"Who are you!?" he cried, sending his cultivation base rotating rapidly. His Dharma Idol appeared behind him, and his heart began to pound rapidly. The strangeness of this place left him feeling completely and utterly unsafe.

The old man's expressionless eyes completely ignored Meng Hao. He turned and walked back toward the statue of the deity. As he neared it, his body gradually faded and then disappeared altogether.

The other projections in the area were still there, some sitting in meditation, some walking about, some practicing cultivation.

Meng Hao was panting rapidly as he began to leave. However, when he reached the threshold of the temple, he stopped in place and looked over to see a shadowy projection sitting cross-legged off to the side. It had a pill furnace in its hand, and was apparently concocting pills.

Furthermore... Meng Hao had never seen this method of pill concoction before; it was as if through absorbing the power of Heaven and Earth, no medicinal plants or other physical ingredients were needed!

Meng Hao gaped in shock. After looking more closely for a moment, his eyes began to shine with a strange light. He was a grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy, and his skill in concocting pills could be considered the highest in the lands of South Heaven, with the exception of Pill Demon.

"Creating something from nothing...." murmured Meng Hao, his eyes shining brightly. Back in the ancient Demon Immortal Sect, he had created a pill from nothing, and it still remained in his bag of holding. He had never consumed it.

Meng Hao felt that it was a miracle that he had even succeeded in concocting that one pill, and he had even tried on one occasion to duplicate it with the copper mirror, but had failed.

Now he saw this dark projection concocting pills here in this place. Its

hands moved with adept proficiency, calm and unhurried.

Meng Hao blinked, and then decided not to leave. He looked around at the projections around him. Some were practicing cultivation, some were walking to and fro, some were utilizing incantation gestures to perform various Daoist magics.

The scene caused Meng Hao's mind to tremble.

"Passing down Daos!!" he murmured. "They're passing down Daos!!" His heart trembled even more than before. A Dao was not something to pass down lightly, but that was exactly what these projections were doing. It was as if all he had to do was go observe and contemplate them, and he would have the opportunity to acquire them.

Meng Hao took a deep breath, then looked back at the dark projection who was concocting pills. He walked over and sat down cross-legged in front of it and watched as it worked. The light in his eyes grew brighter and more brilliant. After a while, he pulled out his own pill furnace and began to imitate the dark figure's pill concocting technique.

A night passed. It wasn't a long time, but it felt very, very long to Meng Hao. It felt like such a long time that he couldn't properly wrap his head around it. Finally, when the sky began to grow bright, the shadowy figure finished concocting a single pill, which it casually tossed out into the mountain range outside of the temple. At some point, Meng Hao became aware that he had also successfully concocted his own pill.

The sky was light now.

The projections in the temple faded away. The strands of hair in the courtyard vanished, and the vines returned to their original state, as if none of it had ever happened. Panting, Meng Hao looked down at the medicinal pill in his hand, which was surrounded by swirling blackness.

Actually, it was not really a pill. It was only a mass of swirling black mist. However, when the sunlight touched it, a black peel formed around it, and then it turned into a black-peeled medical pill.

There was no medicinal aroma to it, but rather, an explosive power.

Meng Hao frowned as he looked at the black-peeled pill. After a moment of thought, he squeezed it, whereupon his face instantly fell. Without hesitation, he threw the pill away from him. In midair, it began to emanate black mist, and then suddenly exploded.

A shockwave swept about in all directions.

“An incomplete concoction... and this is the botched product,” he thought. “But it was still creating something from nothing.” He was actually quite shocked. The explosive power caused by the medicinal pill’s explosion was like an attack.

“It’s too bad it’s so unstable. Simply touching it causes it to explode. Although now that I think about it, something about it seems familiar.” Eyes flickering, he thought back to the path he had trod up to this ancient temple. He had encountered many areas where the ground exploded. All of a sudden, he thought about how the figure had thrown out the medicinal pill just now, and everything clicked....

“This thing... has another use.” Eyes glittering, he thought for a moment, then produced his pill furnace and began to use the same method he had learned the previous night to absorb the spiritual energy of Heaven and Earth and use it to concoct more pills.

After several failures, he finally succeeded in producing two of the same swirling masses of black mist. When the sun touched them, they were covered over with a black peel. Holding the pills in his hand, he flew out of the temple. After a bit of experimentation, he found that the explosive effect would be activated simply by throwing it out. It could be used as a trump card.

“Burying it seems like a waste. I can’t really control it. Throwing it out directly is the best way to use it. With something like this, I have another life-saving technique at my disposal. It’s too bad though. This thing is pretty explosive, but appears to be connected to the unique aura of this place. I doubt I’ll be able to concoct them outside.” After some more thought, he returned to the temple and continued to concoct pills.

Several days passed. At night, Meng Hao would seek enlightenment

regarding the Daos being passed down by the projections. During the day, he would concoct medicinal pills. Soon he had several dozen. He tried to imbue them with divine sense, but it was a failure and he eventually gave up on the idea.

He even left the mountains at one point to try to concoct the pills on the outside, but it didn't work. That confirmed his theory. This type of pill... could only be concocted using the spiritual energy that existed inside the temple.

After returning to the temple, he continued to concoct the unusual black-peeled explosive medicinal pills.

"I imagine that the Chosen from the other worlds will be arriving soon...." His eyes glittered with anticipation regarding the fighting that would break out when they came. He keenly desired to see how he measured up to them, and... exactly how strong or weak he was.

# Chapter 809: Immortal Ancient Dao Meridian!

Time passed. During the nights, Meng Hao closely observed the projections in the temple. Upon deeper examination, it became clear that all of them were different from each other. There were men and women, old people and young. Some of the figures weren't even human, but were strange and beast-like.

After the passage of so much time, Meng Hao had long since lost any sense of fear toward the place. He was also used to all the bizarre scenes that played out. Every day at nightfall, the black strands of hair would emerge from the well. Eventually, Meng Hao found that sitting cross-legged in the hair would fill his body with an incredible coldness that benefited his attempts to gain enlightenment from the figures passing down their Daos.

As for the weeping which came from within the well, after listening to it for some time, Meng Hao realized that there was a bit of charm within the wails....

Then there was the vine swing. Meng Hao had the feeling that some great Dao existed within the swinging motion. An image appeared in his mind of a swing, swaying endlessly back and forth.

Meng Hao even got used to the voices calling out about "going home." Occasionally he would impulsively stamp his feet on the ground in annoyance when the voices disturbed his cultivation.

Essentially, he got used to everything that went on in the temple. That included the old man with blood oozing from his orifices. Whenever Meng Hao sought enlightenment, the old man would stand behind him and look at the top of his head.

After a while, he simply allowed the man to continue to do so.

Meng Hao changed his clothes several times, but no matter how new they were, whenever he awoke after having sunk into enlightenment, the

clothes would be tattered and old. Finally, he gave up and stopped changing them.

Recently, Meng Hao had been observing one particular figure who sat cross-legged in meditation. However, powerful ripples emanated off of the figure's body. After observing for quite some time, the air in front of Meng Hao grew blurry, and a black roc appeared that emanated a savage energy.

"This is a Daoist Magic form!"

It made Meng Hao think of his battle with the Northern Reaches' Imperial Bloodline Clan Chief, and the bizarre divine ability he'd used to transform into various wild beasts. In Meng Hao's opinion, it had been completely extraordinary.

He continued his contemplation, losing himself to it. It was as if he actually returned to that ancient Daoist rites temple to hear the music of the great Dao. He awoke when the sky turned bright, having been significantly enlightened.

Everything in the temple returned to normal around him. Meng Hao could sense that he had made great strides in terms of his cultivation base. His personal Dao Seeking did not contain discrete stages. According to what his father told him, the result of using the Mist Blade to perform his Severing turned his Dao Seeking into a single stage and put him at the very peak of the entire Spirit Realm.

His next step would be true Immortality.

To Meng Hao, the imparting of these strange Daos was incredibly suitable to his current situation. After working with the Daoist magic of Roc Transformation, he proceeded on to another Dao Projection after gaining some enlightenment.

Unfortunately, he could not gain enlightenment regarding all of the Dao Projections. Many were in conflict with his personal direction, which made it impossible for him to understand them.

Meng Hao was now watching a Dao Projection near the wall of the temple. The image that flickered in his eyes was that of a man floating in a

clear sky. The man's hand formed into the shape of a claw, which he stretched out, causing the land beneath him to shatter into pieces.

"It's a claw attack method!"

Meng Hao's consciousness trembled as he imprinted the image into his mind.

A few days later, Meng Hao had just gained enlightenment regarding another Dao Projection when he saw a Daoist off in the distance stretching his hand out and grabbing onto a star. He then pulled down violently, causing the star to tremble and transform into a resplendent glow in the palm of his hand.

"That's... a... magic of Star Plucking!"

Meng Hao immersed himself in gaining enlightenment from the Daoist legacies in the temple. Eventually, he realized that the flame in the bronze oil lamp was showing signs of flickering out. He could tell that when that happened, the good fortune in this particular Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple would be over.

Several days later, Meng Hao took a deep breath as he woke from meditation. By this point, he had identified all of the Daoist Projections that he could gain enlightenment from; unfortunately they were quite miscellaneous. There were only three that Meng Hao truly had a basic understanding of.

The Claw Attack, the Roc Transformation, and the Star Plucking Magic. However, these were just types of magic, not Daos.

"There are millions upon millions of magics, but the Dao can only exist in the heart. Where exactly is... the Dao of this Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple?" Meng Hao looked around until his gaze finally came to rest on the dilapidated statue of the deity.

Finally, he stood and approached the deity. After sitting down cross-legged, he looked up at the broken statue.

The deity statue was more than half destroyed. It had no head, and its

torso was half gone. It was only possible to tell that it was sitting cross-legged, with its right hand extended to form an incantation gesture.

Meng Hao could make the same gesture, but when he did, he got no special feeling at all from the statue.

Feeling a bit annoyed, he turned to the old man behind him and said, "You've been following me around for half a month already. Is my head that interesting to stare at?"

Looking at the man, Meng Hao didn't think he looked fierce or frightening at all any more, just dull and lifeless. "You're formed from the shadow cast by the fire of that oil lamp. Don't tell me you've been watching me this half-month for no reason at all?"

"Immortal!" the old man suddenly said, his voice hoarse and scratchy.

Meng Hao's eyes widened. This was the first time the old man had spoken in the entire half month.

"What did you just say?"

"Immortal!" repeated the old man. "This statue is an Immortal!"

Meng Hao gaped.

"Do you wish to become Immortal?" the old man blurted. His eyes glowed with a strange light as he stared at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao was now starting to once again feel that this old man was very strange. His eyes narrowed slightly as he said, "I only have half a step to take and I'll be a true Immortal."

"How could Immortal be split between true and false...? That's an incorrect path." The old man shook his head, and from the look in his eyes, he seemed to be recalling the past. Then he murmured: "An incorrect path.... Has the legacy been cut off...? Too many years have passed since that war...."

All of a sudden the old man started laughing crazily. "They're all dead! The land is shattered! The river of stars is cut off...." The man continued to laugh, then started to pace back and forth in the temple, weeping.

“Cut off! I can’t suppress the living, I can only suppress the ghosts....

“Gone, everything’s gone....”

Meng Hao’s mind was spinning. He looked at the projected image of the demented old man, and realized he seemed to be filled with an ancient forlorn sadness. The weeping from the well grew more shrill, and more blood dripped down from the swinging vine.

“Senior, which war are you talking about?” Meng Hao asked.

The old man laughed and wailed. The flame in the bronze oil lamp danced wildly, and the projections all rose trembling to their feet and walked around Meng Hao in circles, laughing and weeping.

Meng Hao was panting, and was on the verge of saying something when suddenly a popping sound rang out as... the bronze lamp was extinguished.

Everything vanished.

Darkness reigned. Meng Hao looked around in shock before noticing that far off in the distance, the sun was just beginning to rise.

Meng Hao was in a bit of a daze for the rest of the day. The old man’s words, and all the other events of the previous night, left him feeling that there was some incredible mystery pertaining to this Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple.

It was a secret that perhaps... related to all the lands of South Heaven!

“Why did the enormous Daoist rite temple... disappear just now?

“All of those projections... where did they go to?

“Why is the temple hall in such a state of ruin?”

The day passed, and when night fell, the bronze lamp burned once again, although the flame was dimmer than it had been at the beginning. The old man appeared again. This time, he positioned himself next to the door of the temple hall. He was no longer weeping or crying, but rather, stood there silently.

After a moment, the man suddenly looked over at Meng Hao. “Your father is powerful. Even in the era in which I lived, he would be considered a powerful expert.

“He is also aware that his path is the incorrect one. However, he can do nothing to change that. If he could, he would be even more powerful.

“You have a good foundation, even better than many of the cultivators from my era. Do you... wish to become Immortal? I do not speak of any sort of false or true Immortal. Just Immortal.... A full 100-meridian Immortal!

“Only by opening all 100 meridians can one truly be considered Immortal! Even in past ages, full 100-meridian Immortals were few and far between. Only those who inherit great Daos might be able to reach that state, and with great difficulty at that.”

Meng Hao’s heart trembled. According to his father, 80 meridians made one Chosen, 90 meridians were rarely seen, and 100 meridians... supposedly didn’t exist. Meng Hao nodded in response to the man, his eyes glittering.

“Magic can not be spoken of lightly, and Daos cannot be passed down recklessly. Now that this place has been unsealed, the whole Ninth Mountain and Sea will be set astir....This bronze oil lamp was kindled in ancient times, but what it illuminates is the present.

“It has already burned for more than ten days, and will soon be extinguished. Use your blood as the oil and ensure that it continues to burn unceasingly for seven cycles of seven days, forty-nine days. Do not allow anyone to set foot into the temple hall and touch it. Ensure that only your aura is present in it from beginning to end.

“If you do these things... if the flame burns for seven cycles of seven days, forty-nine days, then it will emit a strand of Immortal Ancient Dao Qi. Fuse that into your body, and it will become an Immortal Ancient Dao Meridian!

“If you have that Dao meridian, given the proper circumstances, you can gain enlightenment of the Dao of Immortality!” The old man gave Meng

Hao a profound look, then turned and merged back into the deity statue.

As Meng Hao stood there silently, a glow of determination filled his eyes. He looked down at the “Immortality” character carved into the ground, and an ancient aura suddenly rose up from within his heart to fill his whole body.

“False Immortal. True Immortal.... Immortal!” he murmured. The bronze lamp abruptly became dimmer, and showed signs of being extinguished. Meng Hao walked forward, cut a slice into his wrist and poured some of his blood into the lamp. Crackling noises could be heard as the flame, instead of being extinguished, actually burned brighter.

Meng Hao sat down cross-legged in front of the lamp, feeling an unprecedented level of clarity in his mind.

A few more days passed. Suddenly, brilliant beams of light appeared in the starry sky outside of Planet South Heaven. An enormous teleportation portal could be seen which caused all of the stars to dim. A glow of starlight spread out in all directions as several dozen figures appeared in the middle of the teleportation portal.

The first three were the Chosen from the Fang Clan. Behind them were more than ten additional Fang Clan members, as well as their accompanying Dao Protectors from the clan.

Their appearance caused the starry sky to shudder. However, most of them were not in the Immortal Realm, and thus could not stay out in the starry sky for long periods of time, requiring others to protect and escort them. Their cultivation bases were in between Dao Seeking and the Immortal Realm, as were those of the three Chosen.

However, there were some clan members who were beyond the Spirit Realm, and although they were not Chosen, their cultivation bases were Immortal. Their appearance on the scene was completely shocking.

“We’re here. This is Planet South Heaven!”

“It seems the Fang Clan is the first party to arrive on the scene. Let’s go. It’s time to acquire some good fortune!” The group of a dozen or so

people, including the Dao Protectors, immediately shot toward Planet South Heaven at top speed.

The three Chosen among the group kept their distance from each other. Each one of them was a person who the other clan members looked up to with reverence. The woman was Fang Xiangshan, and the other two included the bald young man with stars in his eyes and the incredible fleshly body, Fang Yunyi. The other was the one who bathed in the blood of wild beasts, Fang Donghan! 1

These three were known as the Three Great Chosen of the Fang clan. They had not yet reached the Immortal Realm because they were suppressing their cultivation bases in the hopes of building a solid foundation and breaking into true Immortality.

They were people who refused to become false Immortals!

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1. These three members of the Fang Clan were introduced in [chapter 806](#). Here are their names in Chinese. Fang Xiangshan is 方香姗 fāng xiāng shān. Xiang means “fragrant” and Shan means “lithe.” Fang Yunyi is 方云易 fāng yún yì. Yun means “cloud” and Yi means “easy” or “amiable.” Fang Donghan is 方东寒 fāng dōng hán. Dong means “east” and Han means “cold”.

# Chapter 810: Two Restrictions!

Just as the group from the Fang Clan was about to enter Planet South Heaven, a cool voice echoed out from down below.

"Now that the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple has been unsealed, there are two rules here on Planet South Heaven. One. Only cultivators in the Spirit Realm may enter Planet South Heaven. Two. The door to South Heaven will only open once. All who wish to enter must wait to do so together with everyone else."

As the voice echoed into the Fang Clan members' ears, their facial expressions flickered.

"That was clan uncle Fang Xiufeng!"

"Clan uncle, can you please bend the rules a bit? The Patriarch commanded us to come here for good fortune. Clan uncle, please assist us in acquiring it!"

"Immortals can't enter? That's a good rule for others, but we're all from the same clan! We demand to be allowed to enter!"

The calm voice once again rang out from the lands of South Heaven. "I am the Prison Warden of the Ninth Mountain, and I guard Planet South Heaven. Anyone who breaks one of these two rules... will be struck down."

Killing intent bubbled up, causing the Fang clan members' minds to spin. Many were actually enraged. One of the Immortal Realm clan members frowned, and then, relying on the protection his status earned him in the clan, flew directly toward South Heaven.

However, before he could even get close, a beam of sword qi shot up and sliced through him like a sharp knife cutting a blade of grass. Blood spurted out in all directions, and the man's eyes went wide as his body was slashed completely in half. He didn't even have a chance to say anything before he was dead.

Immediately, the Fang Clan members all went silent. The eyes of Fang Xiangshan, Fang Yunyi, and Fang Donghan went wide, and their faces fell.

“Fang Xiufeng, are you saying that we Dao Protectors are not allowed to enter South Heaven?” The voice that spoke was an ancient one. It belonged to an old woman who was positioned behind Fang Xiangshan, and whose eyes glowed with a brilliant light as she spoke.

“You may not!”

“What happens if some accident befalls these members of the younger generation? What then?”

“They are Chosen, and have come to acquire good fortune. They should be prepared to die an early death! Life and death are determined by fate!”

“Just... just because your son is a cripple doesn’t mean you should make it hard for other clan members! No matter what you say, they are your juniors. They—”

“I dare you to call my son a cripple again!” Fang Xiufeng’s voice was suddenly ice cold, causing the old woman to shiver. Beads of cold sweat began to drip down her forehead, and she didn’t speak another word.

It was at this point that an airship could be seen speeding through the void some distance away. More than a hundred people could be seen onboard; this was the Li Clan from North Reed. Sitting in the lead position was the extraordinary woman with the glittering willow leaf mark on her head.

“That’s Li Ling’er!” 1

“They say that she’s the Dao Daughter of this generation of the Li Clan! Her cultivation base is extraordinary, and even exceeds peak Dao Seeking. She could face Immortal Tribulation at any time!”

Next, another figure appeared in the starry sky. It was a young man who stood on a flying sword. Sword light spread out in all directions as he sped forward.

His expression was placid, his features handsome. Just barely visible on his forehead was a third eye. As he neared, quite a few members of the Fang Clan and Li Clan looked over, and their eyes flickered.

“That’s Zhao Yifan from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto, one of the Three Great Daoist Societies. Every generation, they only send two disciples out into the world!”

“People say that he once fought Song Luodan from the Song Clan, and defeated him!”

As the buzz of conversation rose up, a cold snort echoed out. A sea of flames appeared in the starry sky off in the distance, within which could be seen dozens of figures. In the lead position was a young man in a red robe. Perched on his shoulder was a flame crow, and his expression was one of fury. He seemed to emanate the air of a Paragon, and as he flew, the area around him twisted and distorted.

“Zhao Yifan!” he cried. “We didn’t finish fighting last time. Why not pick things up where we left off!?” This young man was none other than Song Luodan of the Song Clan. As he looked at Zhao Yifan, his eyes brimmed with the desire to do battle.

Fang Donghan of the Fang Clan stepped forward, his energy surging. Li Ling’er, daughter of the Li Clan, looked on with a calm expression, but the willow leaf on her forehead emanated an astonishing moon-like glow.

It was at this point that rumbling could be heard from off in the distance as two more teleportation portals appeared in the starry sky outside of South Heaven. Dozens of people appeared within each of the two teleportation portals. In one of them, a veiled woman could be seen. She was slender and graceful, and a bizarre aura emanated out as soon as she appeared on the scene.

Quite a few people looked over at this veiled woman.

In the other teleportation portal, a young man could be seen with eyebrows like swords and eyes like stars. His features were plain, his expression cold. As he stepped forward, his energy surged up with each step. It almost seemed like he wished to exert pressure on the other Chosen, all of whom snorted coldly.

“Demoness Zhixiang from the Demon Immortal Sect!”

"That's... Clan Prince Wang Mu from the Wang Clan! They say that he has energy from the Wang Clan Patriarch, and that he can even force the Wang Clan's ancient sword spirit to capitulate to him!"

Next, one teleportation portal after another appeared. Rumbling could be heard as people from the Five Great Holy Lands, the Three Churches and Six Religions, essentially every major power in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, all appeared in the starry sky above South Heaven. Ripples flowed out in all directions, and energy surged that seemed capable of repressing the entire planet.

Cries of astonishment could be heard from all directions. Each one of these groups contained Chosen who were already famous in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, so their appearance here was completely sensational.

It was at this point that suddenly, a scroll painting swirled out through the starry sky toward the congregated cultivators. It was fully 30,000 meters long, completely shocking, and depicted an enormous mountain.

Countless figures were seated cross-legged on that mountain. One of those figures was surrounded by a swirling Karma blade. When he opened his eyes, everything around that he looked at instantly began to tremble mentally.

"The Ji Clan!!"

"The Ji Clan is here! That's... Ji Yin!"

"The year that the three Ji Clan members fought over the title of Son of Ji, Ji Yin was defeated. However, he is still considered Chosen, and few people of this generation could possibly contend with him!"

Everyone was shaken by the appearance of the Ji Clan; however, the desire to do battle could clearly be seen glowing in the eyes of the various Chosen.

The scroll painting flashed by all of the other cultivators, completely ignoring them as it headed directly toward Planet South Heaven. Before it reached the planet, a beam of sword qi flew out toward it. However, an old man then stepped out from within the scroll painting. He waved his arm

to block the sword qi, but then coughed up a huge mouthful of blood and staggered backward three thousand meters. He looked up, shaken.

“Fang Xiufeng, what is the meaning of this!”

The voice of Meng Hao’s father could be heard from Planet South Heaven. “Two things are not permitted. Anyone above the Spirit Realm, and anyone entering ahead of the appointed time. Rule violators will be beheaded.”

The old man’s face flickered. “You....”

The faces of the cultivators from the other powers also flickered, and then stared down at Planet South Heaven.

“Fang Xiufeng.... I heard that he was honored with the position of top Chosen in the Fang Clan. He was a consummately powerful expert who could shake even the Patriarchs of the various sects!”

“It’s too bad that for the sake of his crippled son, he agreed to guard Planet South Heaven for 100,000 years... and not leave it.”

“I also heard about his story. It’s been a few hundred years, so presumably, his crippled son is long since dead. That’s probably why he’s not too happy with all these Chosen.”

“Hmph! Even if his crippled son isn’t dead, there’s no way he could compare to the Chosen of all the sects! Why the hell is Fang Xiufeng not allowing Immortal Realm cultivators to enter!?”

Even as the standoff continued, a sea dragon appeared, floating through the void. It roared, and the stars seemed to become a sea. Everyone looked over at the woman who sat cross-legged atop the sea dragon, her long hair floating around her.

“That’s Fan Dong’er from the Ninth Sea God World!”

“It’s Goddess Fan Dong’er!”

“I can’t believe she’s here!” Everyone was looking over at her, most notably, Fang Xiangshan and Li Ling’er.

Fang Donghan’s eyes gleamed brightly, and Zhao Yifan’s expression

brightened. The eyes of Wang Mu from the Wang Clan also flickered brightly.

As of this point, all of the Chosen from the Ninth Mountain and Sea who could come, were present!

Meng Hao's father's voice once again drifted up from South Heaven. "The Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple has been unsealed. All of you may enter."

Someone immediately asked, "If those of us in the Immortal Realm seal our cultivation bases and limit ourselves to the Spirit Realm, can we enter?"

Meng Hao's father was silent for a moment, and was apparently thinking. Then he said, "If you seal yourself, then yes, you may enter. But if you exceed the Spirit Realm, you will be destroyed in body and soul!"

"Very well!" Although the various groups weren't happy, this was the mysterious Planet South Heaven, and they didn't dare to piss off Fang Xiufeng in his capacity as Prison Warden. Furthermore, before coming to South Heaven, all of the Patriarchs from their various organizations had instructed them to be cautious in all matters.

There were well over a thousand people who now flew toward Planet South Heaven. Those in the Immortal Realm sealed their cultivation bases so that they were at the peak of the Spirit Realm. Together, they formed a cluster of light beams that shot toward the planet.

On that day, the cultivators in the lands of South Heaven looked up to see over a thousand shooting stars flying across the sky. They descended like meteors, emanating astonishing energy that caused the minds of all South Heaven cultivators to tremble.

Many sects immediately ordered their disciples to remain indoors and not emerge.

There were some sect Patriarchs who came out from secluded meditation. There were precious treasures within their sects that emitted brightly shining light, apparently having formed resonances with some of

the approaching strangers.

The lands of South Heaven were shaken, but the newcomers did nothing to interfere with the planet itself. Before coming here, they had been strictly instructed that because of the unfathomable mysteriousness of Planet South Heaven, it was not to be unnecessarily disturbed.

Therefore, the over one thousand beams of light whistled through the air but did not near any of the sects there. Relying on the auguries from the clan and sect Patriarchs, they headed directly for the Eastern Lands.

They charged into the deep mountains of the vast Eastern Lands, toward the mountain range that housed the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple. In the blink of an eye, the sky trembled and the land shook, almost as if it were on the verge of tearing itself to pieces. Countless numbers of cultivators noticed the shocking display.

There were some great sects in the Eastern Lands who came to the conclusion that some valuable treasure had appeared. That was the only thing that would cause such an incredible display of power.

However, nobody emerged. As they looked out from within their sects, they could see that many of the most terrifying figures emitted ripples that were only of the Dao Seeking stage. However... some were very close to being Immortal, and were obviously there to protect the younger members.

As for the young people, the feeling they gave people was that they were like gods. Soon they would be respected Immortals with flourishing energy, completely shocking to everyone. Therefore, the sects of the Eastern Lands were all struck with fear.

"These are definitely Chosen from outside of South Heaven. Not even the Ji Clan has emerged... they're just watching."

"I wonder what sort of precious treasure appeared to attract so many fearsome Chosen. They... look young, and not because of some art of bodily preservation, but because they truly haven't practiced cultivation for very long. And yet, their cultivation bases are incredible...."

\*

As a reminder, all of these characters were introduced in [chapter 806](#), in which there were physical descriptions as well as other backstory information given.

- Li Ling'er's name in Chinese is 李灵儿 lǐ líng er. Li is a very common surname. It's the same Li from the Li Clan, and also the same as Lord Li. Ling has many meanings, but the main meaning is "spirit." Er is just a sound word.
- Zhao Yifan's name in Chinese is 赵一凡 zhào yī fán. Zhao is a common surname. Yi means "one." Fan means "common" or "mortal."
- Song Luodan's name in Chinese is 宋罗丹 sòng luō dān. Song is a common surname. Luo means "net" or "sieve." Dan means "red" or "pill" as in "medicinal pill."
- Wang Mu's name in Chinese is 王木 wáng mù. Wang is a common surname. Mu means "wood," and is the same character from "Fang Mu."
- Fan Dong'er's name in Chinese is 凡冬儿 fán dōng er. Fan is the same character from Zhao Yifan's name. It means "common" or "mortal." Dong means "winter". Similar to Li Ling'er's name, Er is just a sound word.

\*

1. You may remember someone named "Ling'er" mentioned in [chapter 800....](#)

# Chapter 811: I've Been Waiting!

The sects were shaken, and even the Ji Clan simply looked on from the sidelines. Not a single group from the Eastern Lands made a move. Some of the newcomers, upon passing through the Eastern Lands, were shaken by the draconic qi of the Great Tang. A few even looked a bit greedy and headed in that direction. However, as soon as they neared, the Great Tang's ninety-five golden dragons roared, and those people exploded into hazes of blood.

That, of course, shocked all of the outsiders; even Fan Dong'er's eyes widened.

After that incident, no one dared to even get near the Great Tang, but steered clear as they headed toward the mountain range that was their destination.

During all the commotion, two figures could be seen lurking in one of the mortal cities that existed in the vast Eastern Lands. They sat there slurping noodles and looking around with shifty eyes.

The mortals could not see all the beams of light that whistled through the air up above, but these two men could. In fact, they were looking at them quite closely, studying them in detail. They noted the location of their bags of holding, as well as any pendants or jewelry they wore.

"It's too bad none of them have fur or feathers!" said one of the two, a young man. He shook his head and then slurped up a mouthful of broth. "Pay attention, Little Third. These people are definitely easy marks!"

"In the days to come, we're going to eat and drink to our fill, all thanks to these fat sheep, ripe for the plucking. Come come. Let's pick one of them."

Next to the young man was a fat man who suddenly pointed up into the air. "I pick him! One look and I can tell he's a bad person. Immoral and completely shameless! He is obviously steeped in wicked deeds! Lord Third MUST convert him!"

The person he pointed at was a young man with an arrogant expression

on his face. He wore silks and satins, and was surrounded by an entourage of attendants. He even wore a violet crown, making him look extremely powerful and extraordinary.

"Him? Alright. Now, use the method I taught you to turn into a hot babe." The fat man's young companion looked at the target with a wily glint as the two of them vanished.

Back in the deep mountains, Meng Hao sat cross-legged in the temple. His eyes suddenly snapped open, and he looked up into the sky.

"The time has come to begin the tempering that father talked about...." he murmured.

"The Immortal Ancient Daoist Rites Temple is a test. If I can pass it, and keep the bronze lantern from being extinguished, then a genuine Immortal Meridian will form in my body!"

"I also want to see exactly how awesome these Chosen from outside of South Heaven actually are." A bashful smile appeared as he thought about all the black-peeled pills he had arranged outside of the temple.

He closed his eyes and continued to wait.

Time passed. A few days later, many Chosen of the Ninth Mountain and Sea were now gathered outside the mountain range, studying the place from afar. Their expressions were somber; in their view, this place was full of mysteries. As they neared, they realized that the airspace up above was restricted, and as they proceeded onwards the restrictions on their movement grew even stronger. There were fatal dangers hidden around every corner that would lead to calamitous results at the slightest inattention.

Of course, anyone who came to this place had made some advanced preparations. The various sects and clans split up and spread out, choosing different routes as they made their way into the mountain range.

Some disciples among the crowd had grim looks on their faces. Apparently something had happened to them in the past few days that had nearly driven them mad. Whatever it was, they weren't willing to talk

to anyone about it, and could only grit their teeth and endure their frustration as they followed the other clans and sects into the mountains.

There were quite a few such disciples, several dozen in fact.

The holy Fang Clan, the Three Great Clans, the Three Great Daoist Societies, the Three Churches and Six Sects, and the Five Great Holy Lands, had all sent people here, with the exception of the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite. In total, there were over a thousand people entering the mountains, clutching magical items in their hands as they attempted to be the first to make their way into the unsealed Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple.

It didn't take long for the mountains to begin to echo with the sound of magical techniques being employed. Soon, the restrictions in the air above made flight impossible for everyone. Of course, they were prepared for this. However, injuries and deaths still occurred. Nonetheless, as a whole, the group made its way ever closer to Meng Hao.

"The real contest isn't on the road, but at the actual Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple itself!"

"Whoever gets inside first will have the best chance at getting the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Medallion!"

"Other than the medallion, the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temples always have Dao Projections passing down Daos. There will definitely be chances to get divine abilities and Daoist magics!"

"I'll kill anyone who tries to compete with me!"

The Chosen of the various sects and clans proceeded forward with glittering eyes.

One of the Five Great Holy Lands was Mount Sun. According to the legends, the mountain had actually been magically transformed from a sun that had fallen out of the sky. All of the people in that area had experienced a sort of baptism, and were blessed with a special bloodline. That was how the Mount Sun Holy Land came to be.

When Lord Ji fought the Heavens, Mount Sun offered powerful support.

Therefore, in later days Ji Tian conferred on Mount Sun the status of Holy Land.

There were a few dozen cultivators from Mount Sun in the group that had come to Planet South Heaven. The most impressive of all of them was a young man who was named Taiyang Zi 1. He wore a golden robe that made him look like an actual sun, and radiated intense heat that caused the land around him to burst into flames wherever he went. Quite a few fellow clan members accompanied him, as well as some elder Dao Protectors.

This powerful group charged forward at top speed, and were one of the first to get close to the temple itself.

Eventually, they found themselves in a valley. One of the clan members that was in the lead checked the surroundings and determined that it was free of any obstruction. However, as soon as they set foot inside, a huge explosion rippled out, and a black light shot into the air. The Mount Sun cultivator who was caught up in the blackness screamed miserably and coughed up a mouthful of blood as his body was tossed backwards. At the same time, seven or eight additional explosions could be heard echoing out through the mountains in quick succession. More bloodcurdling screams echoed out.

This gave rise to instant shock on the part of everyone.

Taiyang Zi's eyes flickered with a serious expression. Everyone exchanged glances, then proceeded forward even more cautiously than before. All of the forces that had come to South Heaven were the same.

Among the Fang Clan cultivators, Fang Donghan's face was grim, and blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth. He was the one who had just been injured by stepping in the wrong place. If he hadn't leapt to the side as quickly as he had, he would barely be alive.

In another area, one of the Li Clan cultivators wasn't so lucky, and was torn to pieces, destroyed in body and spirit. This filled the other Li Clan members' hearts with horror.

The Ji Clan was moving very quickly, until one of their clan members

made a misstep and was ripped to shreds....

Explosions rang out among the sects and churches, followed by bellows of rage.

All of these things were caused by the power of the restrictive spells that only grew stronger and more numerous as they neared the temple. Meng Hao himself had faced dangerous situations several times on his journey to the place, but with the help of the Immortal Ancient Daoist Medallion, had been able to avoid most of them with ease.

By now, Meng Hao could hear the explosions from his position inside the temple hall. He knew that this was a struggle over good fortune, and that hostilities were certain to occur. He took a deep breath, and the desire to do battle gleamed in his eyes. Finally, he stood up and poured some more of his blood into the oil lamp. It was something he had to do on virtually a daily basis, lest the flame flicker out.

Next, he left his second true self sitting cross-legged in the temple hall and walked out into the courtyard. When he reached the main gate and was just about to push it open, he paused, then headed back to the door that led into the temple hall. There, he dug a few holes and carefully placed some of the black-peeled medicinal pills inside. Satisfied with the results, he walked outside of the courtyard gate and sat down cross-legged.

It was time to wait for everyone to arrive!

"If there's going to be a battle, then I'll fight to my heart's content!" he thought. He steadied his breathing, and as he did, the glow of a great Dao began to emanate off of him. There were no distracting thoughts in his head; only the increasingly strong desire to do battle.

His current state formed something of a resonance with his surroundings. All of a sudden, he saw images of cultivators fighting a decisive battle in the ancient Daoist rite temple.

As of this moment, Meng Hao almost didn't seem to belong to the current world. He was back in ancient times, and was inundated by its aura. His entire person emanated an archaic air.

Coupled with his tattered gray garments, he seemed to be a part of the ancient temple which lay behind him. Anyone who looked at him would have a hard time telling whether or not he was from the modern age, or ancient times.

Several hours passed, during which time explosions rang out constantly. On a few occasions, seven or eight explosions could be heard at exactly the same time, causing the ground to tremble.

Because of all these things, the pace of the powerful clan members and Chosen of the various sects had slowed down to a crawl. Further, the closer they got to the temple, the fewer available paths existed, until there was only one left. Of the over one thousand people who had come, many were dead or severely injured. The survivors now looked at the tiny path that led up into the distance. Nobody seemed willing to go first.

"The fact that there are restrictive spells in this place isn't surprising. However, a mere step activates the explosive devices under the ground. For some reason, they don't seem like restrictive spells to me!"

"Is it possible that someone buried these things here on purpose?"

"From the looks of it, that's exactly the case. That means that the person who buried these things must be up ahead!"

"Dammit! How pernicious! How many of those things did he set up...?"

"I don't care who did it, when we get to the temple, he's dead!"

As more people joined the crowd, more and more enraged curses could be heard.

Finally, Taiyang Zi of Mount Sun snorted coldly and stepped forward. His body shone with brilliant light, and his expression was indifferent. Quite a few people looked over.

"Of course they aren't restrictive spells," he said coolly. "They are black-peeled medicinal pills!" With that, he extended his hand. A bright glow appeared in his palm, within which was a black-peeled medicinal pill.

"I happened to dig this pill up from a location further back. There is a

chaotic qi inside of it, very unstable. It's obvious that someone buried them here on purpose."

At this point, Zhao Yifan from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto coolly said, "Ladies and gentlemen, these black-peeled pills do indeed contain extremely unstable chaotic qi, and it is certain that the path up ahead is riddled with pills just like this one. Why don't we all join forces to clear the way?"

As a representative of one of the Three Great Daoist Societies, his words carried a lot of weight.

"The chaotic qi in that medicinal pill is very dense," said Fan Dong'er from the Ninth Sea God World. Her voice was calm and pleasing to the ear, and when the Chosen of the other sects heard her words, they exchanged glances and then began to nod.

Since everyone was in agreement, people began to produce magical items. Ripples that resembled a great Dao flowed out, and a sound like the roaring of dragons and phoenixes could be heard. Beams of light intersected, and the ripples merged together to become a powerful force that surged ahead across the ground. As it passed, it seemed to scrape away the ground itself, cutting out a path about a meter deep.

Figures shot forward as the Chosen employed all the speed they could muster to follow the path toward the temple that could be seen at its end!

When they arrived, they saw a figure sitting cross-legged outside the temple wearing a tattered robe. He emanated an ancient aura, and seemed as archaic as the temple itself. Within the temple behind him could be seen the manifestation of an ancient Daoist rite temple, leaving everyone completely shocked.

The cross-legged man opened his eyes, and he almost seemed to be looking out at ancient times. When he spoke, his voice echoed out, bolstered by an archaic aura.

"I've been waiting for you...."

Everyone gasped and stopped in their tracks.

\*

1. Taiyang Zi's name in Chinese is 太阳子 tài yáng zǐ. "Taiyang" literally means "sun." Zi means "son" or "child." Therefore, his name could also be translated "Sun Child" or "Sun of the Son," or something similar. However, it's literally his name, not a title, so I'm going with Taiyang Zi.

# Chapter 812: I'm the Groundskeeper

There were already more than ten Chosen who came to a stop when they saw Meng Hao. They had come to the conclusion that someone might have come to this place before them. But when they caught sight of Meng Hao, their thought process was turned on end.

“He’s....”

“He looks young, but from the feeling he gives off, he seems have existed from ancient times all the way until now! Who is he?!”

“Look at his robes! They’ve obviously passed through countless years of time. Just look at them! He obviously didn’t just put on some random tattered robes as a disguise. Those clothes rotted away while he was wearing them!”

“Could it be... could it be that he’s the Dao Protector of this Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple!?”

“That archaic air about him is something you can’t fake. It’s definitely real!”

It really was true that the feeling Meng Hao gave off was not that of a cultivator belonging to their current age. By now, the elder members of the various sects and clans from the Ninth Mountain and Sea were arriving. When they saw Meng Hao sitting cross-legged in front of the ancient temple they couldn’t help but gasp.

“This man’s ancient aura is exactly the same as that of the ancient temple! Could it be... that he really is a Dao Protector?!”

“I once heard a story that in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, when those four other Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temples were unsealed, there were always strange aspects to them. In one, a person like a Dao Protector appeared!”

“But he... looks too young! What if he got here before us and is just trying to pull a fast one on us!?”

Various comments could be heard. Some people were shaken and some

were suspicious. As for the Chosen, they were very intelligent people, adept in the arts of scheming. After all, one could not rely on latent talent alone to become an outstanding Chosen.

Although they had received a bit of a shock, they quickly began to look closely at Meng Hao, and strange gleams could be seen in their eyes.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever, but inwardly he was shocked. When he heard their discussions, his heart began to thump with eagerness, and then a bit of a bashful expression appeared deep in his eyes. After a moment, though, it turned serious, and his dispassionate gaze swept over the crowds.

His tattered robes rippled despite the lack of a breeze, and the ancient aura grew stronger. As he intentionally caused the music of the great Dao to grow stronger, Meng Hao slowly began to speak in a very ancient-sounding voice.

"The Immortal Ancient has been unsealed and the great Dao has descended. In this place of legacies, you must decide which path is the correct one.... Cultivators of the junior generation, step forward.... I... have been waiting for you for quite some time...." He lifted his right arm and then flicked his sleeve. However, the flicking of his sleeve caused nothing to happen.

The crowds looked around cautiously, eyes flickering. Seeing that nothing untoward was occurring, Taiyang Zi snorted.

"You're an impostor!" he said, striding forward. "A deceitful mischief-maker!" However, he only made it three steps before he suddenly stopped in place and stared with unprecedented shock at something up ahead of him.

When the crowds saw this happen, their eyes flickered. Fang Xiangshan took a step forward, as did Fang Yunyi and Fang Donghan. After three steps, all of them trembled and stopped in place, then began to pant as they stared at something up ahead.

A strange gleam could be seen in the eyes of Zhao Yifan from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto. He, along with Wang Mu and Song Luodan

from the Song Clan, all stepped forward. They also stopped after only three steps.

Li Ling'er's eyes flickered as she stepped forward, along with Ji Yin, around whose body swirled Ji Clan Karma. They were followed by Fan Dong'er from the Ninth Sea Godworld.

Eventually, all of the Chosen stepped forward, as well as their Dao Protectors. Only Zhixiang remained behind as she stared in shock at Meng Hao sitting there cross-legged in front of the temple. She blinked a few times in disbelief and then... almost laughed. 1

By now, just about everyone had stepped forward. As soon as they passed into the three hundred meter area surrounding the temple, they experienced the same shocking vision Meng Hao had seen when he first visited this place.

It was a vision of a grand square made of green limestone. Countless figures practiced cultivation, and on a tall altar, an old man was giving a sermon about the Dao. His voice was impossible to hear clearly, but when he waved his sleeve, a huge "Immortal" character appeared.

A river of stars flowed through the sky, and the moon and sun rose and set. People plucked stars from the sky and stamped onto the ground to extract spirits. A rumbling battleground could be seen, and people gained Dao enlightenment. One man rose to his feet laughing, and his body grew unimaginably large until only a toe was visible. The rest of his body... couldn't be seen.

Everyone was shaken by what they saw. They almost felt as if they had been transported back into ancient times, and it left their minds spinning. What they saw in the end was a figure sitting cross-legged in front of them, a person that looked... like Meng Hao!

Before they could look closely, the vision faded away and everything returned to normal. Everyone was breathing heavily. Even Taiyang Zi trembled as he looked over at Meng Hao. Now he didn't dare to speak in the same way he had before.

Now, it seemed obvious to them that when Meng Hao had flicked his

sleeve earlier, it wasn't that a divine ability hadn't manifested. Instead, it was a Daoist magic that was too profound for them to understand.

The people in the crowd exchanged glances. They didn't want to believe, but the shocking images they had just witnessed felt too real.

A random female disciple clasped hands and bowed deeply to Meng Hao. "Senior... are you... the Dao Protector of this place?"

Having heard her question, everyone looked expectantly at Meng Hao. As for Zhixiang, a strange expression appeared on her face.

The Chosen were completely focused. They might have received a shock just now, but their eyes glittered exactly as they had before. Zhao Yifan looked closely at Meng Hao, and the glow of swords could be seen in his eyes.

Fan Dong'er's expression was tranquil, but a sharp gleam could be seen in her eyes as she looked from Meng Hao to the temple behind him.

Ji Yin had an icy look. He said nothing as he stood there, and yet a strange pressure radiated off of him, and Karma swirled around him the same as ever.

The were all looking at Meng Hao. Meng Hao was now the center of attention of all the Chosen of the sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain. Many of the people who looked at him did so with narrowed eyes.

"I am not the Dao Protector of this Daoist rite temple," said Meng Hao, his voice quavering. "I am merely the groundskeeper." A look of reminiscence appeared on his face, something he had learned from the crazy old man in the temple hall.

HIs words instantly caused many people to inhale sharply.

"The groundskeeper? I heard a story once that in many ancient places like this, the most powerful people aren't the Dao Protectors, but rather, the unassuming groundskeepers!"

"I heard the same thing...." Even as people discussed the matter, an arrogant looking young man stepped out, a dark expression on his face.

He wore splendidly decorated garments, and a crown. The power of the stars seemed to swirl around him as he walked out from the crowd.

"That's the Quasi-Dao Child from the Church of the Immortal Emperor!"

"I heard that he once killed a false Immortal! Of course, he got injured in the process, but that's something an ordinary Spirit Realm cultivator could never do!"

More discussions buzzed as the young man walked in Meng Hao's direction. He was followed by dozens of disciples of the Church of the Immortal Emperor, as well as several old men who had sealed their cultivation bases. All of these people wore cold gazes and clearly didn't believe anything that Meng Hao said.

"I don't care if you're a Dao Protector, a groundskeeper, or even if you're just running a scam. Step aside! I'm going into that temple!"

As they neared, Meng Hao's face darkened. He raised his hand, and even though there was no wind in the area, his clothes rippled. Shockingly, the Black White Pearls appeared in his hand, transforming into an ancient, archaic power that spread out in all directions.

Meng Hao then recalled how the old man on the boat had looked all those years ago, and mimicked the same look. His eyes filled with an archaic aura as he looked at the young man from the Church of the Immortal Emperor.

"Stop right there!" he said coolly. The Black White Pearls emanated a brilliant glow, and in the blink of an eye, Meng Hao seemed to radiate an intense archaic will.

The Quasi-Dao Child from the Church of the Immortal Emperor stopped in place, his face flickering. Then he stared dead on at Meng Hao.

The people who were following him, and in fact, everyone present, were all staring at Meng Hao. Each and every one of them weren't sure what to make of Meng Hao, and didn't want to rashly attempt to make a move against him.

“The Immortal Ancient has been unsealed, but that does not mean just anyone can enter and be enlightened regarding this Daoist rite temple. Any who are capable of achieving their Dao may approach.”

The Quasi-Dao Child from the Church of the Immortal Emperor hesitated. As he looked at Meng Hao he got the feeling that he was filled with some mysterious energy, although it was difficult to be sure about the matter. He looked back at the others in the crowd, and saw that they had similar expressions.

Nobody said a word. Currently, the sky was growing dark, and the moon had appeared. Suddenly a wind began to blow, and whimpering sounds could be heard. Darkness began to stretch out across the land. It was at this point that Fang Donghan chuckled coldly and stepped forward. His energy surged, and intense power rose up from his cultivation base.

“It doesn’t matter who you are. It’s time for you to give me some feedback on my combat skills!” He sped up, and was just on the verge of attacking Meng Hao, when Meng Hao muttered something to himself. The sky was getting dark, and the whimpering of the wind had given him an idea. He suddenly glared at Fang Donghan.

He rose up from his cross-legged position, instantly attracting the attention of all the onlookers. Many of them were skeptical about the whole situation, and didn’t quite believe he was telling the truth.

Even Fang Donghan’s eyes widened. Superficially, his actions seemed impulsive, but he was actually a very cautious person.

As everyone looked on, Meng Hao suddenly threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“An incorrect path.... Has the legacy been cut off...? Too many years have passed since that war....” He continued to laugh, and soon the laughter was tinged with madness.

“They’re all dead! The land is shattered! The river of stars is cut off....” Suddenly, he seemed to be weeping, and began to pace back and forth.

“Cut off! I can’t suppress the living, I can only suppress the ghosts....

“Gone, everything’s gone....”

His words seemed to provoke a reaction from his surroundings. The wind became cold and strong, and the sound of a weeping woman could be heard drifting about. The land trembled, and everyone’s faces flickered as complete darkness fell. It was at this point that....

“Save me, I want to go home.... Paragon, save me. Save me, Paragon....” Dismal voices rose up from the ground, and a shocking coldness filled the air. Black hair roiled out from the well inside the temple. The vines drooped down and began to swing back and forth. The sounds of weeping and laughing filled the air.

The only faint light that could be seen was from the bronze oil lamp’s flickering flame.

When you added in Meng Hao’s voice, it all turned into a terrifying scene that would make anyone’s hair stand on end. All of the Chosen who had doubted Meng Hao before were now completely shocked. Fang Donghan’s scalp went numb, and he immediately backed up. The Quasi-Dao Child from the Church of the Immortal Emperor gasped, and staggered backward in astonishment.

Meng Hao continued to weep and laugh in front of the temple, feeling very pleased with himself.

\*

1. By way of reminder, Meng Hao helped Zhixiang in the ancient Demon Immortal Sect. She then said that the new Demon Immortal Sect would owe him a favor.

# Chapter 813: Inky and Lily

With the exception of Zhixiang, all of the Chosen who had come to the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple were shaken. They were now... starting to feel convinced about Meng Hao.

Some had been skeptical before, but then, one bizarre thing after another appeared. The strange sights, the cold wind, the shocking aura... made it so they had no choice but to believe.

This was especially true when apparently, Meng Hao's crazed weeping and laughing resonated with his surroundings. It left the onlookers with tingling scalps. The bizarre phenomena in the place, the inky black hair, the swinging vine, the voices rising up from the ground, all of it appeared to them to have been caused by Meng Hao.

Even Zhixiang stared with eyes wide from disbelief. If she didn't already know Meng Hao, she would have been completely astonished.

If everything went as planned, it might be able to buy Meng Hao some time, but not much. The people here were all extraordinary, and the slightest misstep could arouse their suspicions. All it would take would be for one person to attack him, and the charade would be broken.

In fact, it was at this moment that an elder member of the Ji Clan suddenly moved forward, eyes glittering, clearly with the intent of testing Meng Hao out.

Meng Hao sighed as he realized that these people really weren't easy to fool. However, it was at this point that the old man from the Ji Clan suddenly stopped in place, and his face filled with astonishment. Everyone else's expressions also flickered, and not a few people actually gasped.

Meng Hao was taken aback and wondered what he had done to provoke such a reaction.

It was at this point that a cold wind gusted against his back. It almost felt like ice on the nape of his neck. Reflexively, he turned around to see....

A head floating up from the well behind him. It was a head that looked

like it had been rotting away in the waters of the well for millions of years!

When Meng Hao turned around, the head floated over toward him, and just when it seemed it would touch him, he blinked. Then he turned back to the crowds and, his voice placid, said, "This is Inky. There's no need to fear her."

He cleared his throat and then pointed over to the swinging vine that dripped with black blood. "Over there is Lily. Come on, Lily, say hello to everyone."

As soon as he spoke, the vine stopped moving. Then the dripping blood began to move, as if an invisible figure were walking over to stand next to Meng Hao.

Even Meng Hao was shocked by this. He looked at the black blood dripping to the ground next to him and could just barely make out the image of a little girl standing there, but it was unclear whether she was staring at the crowds of people, or at him.

Meng Hao wasn't sure how much longer he could keep this up. Giving a firm look at the crowd of nearly a thousand people, he sat down cross-legged and closed his eyes to meditate.

He was starting to feel that he might have taken things a bit too far....

In the eyes of all the onlookers, Meng Hao, with his tattered robe, placid expression, and ancient air, seemed to be at one with the temple. As he sat there cross-legged, the pale-white head floated behind him, surrounded by drifting strands of inky blackness.

Next to Meng Hao was some invisible being that dripped black blood down onto the ground. Each drop that splashed onto the ground echoed with strange power that filled their hearts with shock.

No one dared to move a muscle, not even Zhao Yifan from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto, who stood there hesitating. Further off, Fan Dong'er was staring at Meng Hao, a brilliant light flickering in her eyes.

Ji Yin sat cross-legged some distance away, Karma swirling around him in such a way that it was impossible to even see him clearly.

The three Chosen from the Fang Clan all sat down. Occasionally, Fang Yunyi would look over at Zhixiang with a look of adoration. Fang Donghan stared the temple, his eyes flickering with desire.

Song Luodan sat with the Song Clan, proud and aloof. Occasionally he would look at Meng Hao, and the desire to fight could be seen flickering in his eyes.

As for Li Ling'er, it was impossible to tell what she was thinking. Her head was bowed and she seemed to be studying the earth in front of her. Occasionally she would gently stroke her hand across the surface of the ground, apparently performing some type of augury.

Wang Mu sat there with flickering eyes that made it impossible to read his thoughts.

The Chosen of the other sects, churches and Holy Lands were all lost in thought in the darkness of night. Shockingly, they sat there in front of the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple for an entire night.

At dawn, the oil lamp winked out. Meng Hao knew that once night ended, the lamp would stop burning. However, only when it was truly extinguished would the trial by fire actually be over.

The instant the sky became bright, Meng Hao opened his eyes. The floating head had vanished, and the dripping blood was gone. Everything returned to its normal state. Many people in the crowd opened their eyes to look at Meng Hao.

Zhao Yifan was the first person to stand up and approach Meng Hao. Fan Dong'er rose to her feet at almost the same time, and approached from a different direction. Li Ling'er looked coldly over at Meng Hao and also moved toward him.

In addition, Ji Yin stood, Karma swirling around him as he began to stride in Meng Hao's direction.

There were other Chosen who also began to approach Meng Hao, angry looks on their faces.

"Stop right there!" said Meng Hao coolly.

The others said nothing in response, but rather, sped up. Zhao Yifan was the fastest, and he waved his hand as he closed in on Meng Hao, causing a stream of sword qi to appear. The dragon-like sword qi spread out, transforming into nine shocking Sword Dragons. Their roaring caused the air to vibrate as they twirled together to shoot toward Meng Hao.

"Fellow Daoist," said Zhao Yifan, "I can sense the aura of South Heaven on you! You're no groundskeeper!"

By the time he finished speaking, the Sword Dragons were almost upon Meng Hao.

"The Dao of the sword exists in the heart, and within one's will," continued Zhao Yifan. The nine Sword Dragons had transformed into nine swords that stabbed down toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered as his desire to fight exploded up. As he rose to his feet, his right hand clenched into a fist that punched out toward the nine swords.

As he punched out, a mountain appeared in front of his fist, which rumbled through the air to slam into the nine swords. A huge boom rattled out, and massive ripples spread out in every direction.

"Your Karma is not that of someone from ancient times." The cold voice belonged to Ji Yin. As it echoed about, his body went blurry, then reappeared behind Meng Hao. His right hand flashed in an incantation gesture and then pushed out toward Meng Hao's back with lightning speed.

The motion caused Meng Hao's soul to tremble. All the memories in his life seemed to appear, which transformed into Karma that stirred his mind.

Meng Hao's expression was calm, and he snorted coldly. Since his act had been seen through, there was no point in continuing with the facade. His left hand flashed in an incantation gesture and he pointed toward Ji Yin.

The Withering Character Incantation erupted out, and the air between

Meng Hao and Ji Yin seemed to collapse as a huge black hole appeared. It instantly exerted an incredible gravitational force that rumbled loudly. Meng Hao leapt backward as Li Ling'er appeared in front of him, her beautiful face twisted with the desire to kill.

"The memories of this land say you only got here a month earlier than us!" she said. Her graceful hands performed an incantation, and the willow leaf mark on her forehead flickered. Suddenly, a willow leaf appeared in her hand.

As soon as the willow leaf appeared, a boundless life force exploded out of it. When it reached its pinnacle, it suddenly began to show signs of death. The willow leaf turned black, and then flitted out into the air toward Meng Hao.

"Seal!" said Li Ling'er coolly. The willow leaf emitted a rumbling sound as it exploded. It transformed into a network of black veins that almost looked like a net, which then descended toward Meng Hao.

Seeing that he was about to be sealed, Meng Hao snorted coldly and then stretched out both arms. He lifted his head up and shouted, invoking some Daoist magics he had learned that enabled him to sprout feathers and grow hide. Shockingly, he transformed into a huge black roc, cruel and savage in appearance, that escaped the enveloping black veins.

As soon as he shot into the air, he heard a melodious voice speaking in his ear.

"Daoist Brother, you're quite exceptional. You almost had Dong'er here fooled." As the voice was transmitted to him, Meng Hao suddenly felt his hair stand up on end as a profound sense of danger filled him. Without hesitation, he produced the Lightning Cauldron. Lightning covered his body, and he switched places with Li Ling'er.

As soon as he switched places, he looked over at Fan Dong'er and saw that she had a Blue Lotus in her hand. A moment ago, a young boy could be seen standing on the lotus, beckoning to him as if he wanted to turn him into a lotus seed to pop into his mouth.

There was also a rusted black needle that emanated an aura of rot,

which had been thrown toward him by one of the old men standing next to Song Luodan of the Song Clan. If that needle had stabbed into him, he would have been transformed into a puddle of blood.

All of these things take some time to describe, but actually happened in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. Meng Hao had just exchanged blows with Zhao Yifan of the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto, one of the Three Great Daoist Societies, Ji Yin of the Ji Clan, Li Ling'er of the Li Clan, and Fan Dong'er of the Ninth Sea God World.

It seemed like a simple encounter, but in actuality, it brimmed with killing intent. The slightest misstep, and Meng Hao's blood would have showered down like rain. Even as the desire to fight burned in his eyes, Li Ling'er's face fell. The willow leaf mark on her forehead glittered rapidly, and Fan Dong'er made a surprised grunt and held back her attack. Because of that, Li Ling'er was able to avoid the deadly Blue Lotus Magic.

Everyone watching the encounter was completely shocked. Strange gleams appeared in some of the Chosen's eyes as they flew into the air toward Meng Hao.

"Who is this guy? Zhao Yifan and those others all attacked at the same time, and he still didn't seem to be in a bad position!"

"He can't just be some random person! I wonder how long he's been practicing cultivation. If it's less than a thousand years, then he's definitely extraordinary!"

"He just avoided the Blue Lotus Magic of Goddess Fan Dong'er from the Ninth Sea God World! That Lightning Cauldron has the power of Form Displacement Transposition!"

"You're missing the most important part, which is... he got here before us! He must be in possession of the good fortune of the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple!"

# Chapter 814: Call Me Meng Hao!

At the same moment in which such words were spoken, Meng Hao fell back. Simultaneously, a cold snort could be heard echoing out from some distance away.

"Last night I could see the clues," said Song Luodan. "However, despite your fakery, the apparition behind you was real. Now... I will cut you down, and show you that nobody makes a fool of me!"

Song Luodan was the Song Clan cultivator with the scar that ran from his forehead down to his neck. Flaming magical symbols burst out around him, and the flame crow on his shoulder stared coldly at Meng Hao. When Song Luodan stepped forward, the energy of peak Dao Seeking erupted out. However, this was not the ordinary power of peak Dao Seeking, but rather, something that exceeded that.

He was even more powerful than the Imperial Bloodline Clan Chief who Meng Hao had fought. He had Immortal will swirling around him. Shockingly, despite still being in Dao Seeking, he cultivated a battle prowess comparable to a false Immortal.

Behind him was an emaciated old man who appeared to be nothing more than skin and bones. His face was expressionless, but his eyes were icy cold. He gave off a terrifying feeling that made him seem like a powerful Immortal that could suppress Meng Hao in a single move.

His body seemed to have numerous open meridians, but clearly they had been sealed and could not be used. Now, he was only able to wield the power of a false Immortal.

Actually, false Immortals were the highest level of cultivation that Meng Hao's father had permitted into South Heaven.

In the moment that Song Luodan stepped forward, Meng Hao spun in midair and looked at him and the old man, killing intent flickering in his eyes.

The vicious needle thrown out by the Song Clan just now had been

incredibly sinister.

“I’m gonna kill you!” said Meng Hao, transforming into a huge roc that sped toward Song Luodan. Shocking rumbling filled the air as the roc and Song Luodan exchanged more than a hundred moves in the blink of an eye.

Fire rippled everywhere, and a sea of flames roiled off of Song Luodan. It transformed into the shape of a flame crow that attacked Meng Hao.

Their attacks were shocking, and caused everything to tremble. Although they were fighting in midair, Meng Hao didn’t want to get too far away from the temple’s main gate. As for other locations along the wall where it seemed possible to go in, he ignored those. He remembered from his initial premonition that if someone tried to enter in that fashion, they would be struck dead.

Booms echoed out; Zhao Yifan and the others stopped in place to watch the fighting, as did everyone else.

“That guy is incredible. He was at a bit of a disadvantage earlier when he was up against Fan Dong’er and the others, but now that he’s fighting Song Luodan alone... it’s hard to say who’s going to win!”

“It’s got to be Song Luodan! He was able to fight with Zhao Yifan from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto. Supposedly he lost, but he’s also very smart, which is his strong point!”

Everything shook, and brilliant lights flashed about. Within his sea of flames, Song Luodan looked like a flame Immortal, calm yet threatening. At one point, he flew into the air, lifted his right foot and violently kicked down toward Meng Hao.

“DIE!”

The kick gave rise to a flame sea, which then transformed into another flame crow that seemed capable of ripping the air apart. Flames spread out in all directions, and seemed to be on the verge of sealing Meng Hao.

At the same time, the old Dao Protector at his side laughed coldly and waved his hand. Another decaying needle appeared, which shot toward

Meng Hao. Immediately, Meng Hao's eyes flickered with killing intent.

He snorted coldly, raising his right hand into the air and pointing at Song Luodan. Immediately, the Blood Demon Grand Magic appeared, and a rumbling vortex formed around Song Luodan. Like a dragon gulping down water, it sucked in the flame sea and left Song Luodan completely revealed out in the open.

Song Luodan's face flickered with astonishment. His right foot began to wither, and he let out a roar. Coughing up a mouthful of blood, he fell back at full speed. Somehow... in this moment of grave crisis, he actually managed to escape the Blood Demon Grand Magic vortex. He retreated, face pale, looking at Meng Hao with an expression of both shock and the cold desire to kill.

All of the observers were shaken. Amongst the crowd, Zhixiang's eyes were wide, and she was panting. The divine ability vortex she had just seen reminded her of a legendary Daoist magic she had read about in the ancient records of her sect, something that had long since been lost to the passage of time.

Zhao Yifan from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto was looking on with shining eyes, the flames of battle flickered in his pupils. Li Ling'er from the Li Clan of Planet North Reed was also panting. Her expression was one of extreme concentration as she stared at Meng Hao.

The four who had attacked just now did not do so with all their strength. Therefore, the fact that Meng Hao was able to evade those attacks merely left them thinking that there was more to him than met the eye. Nothing had happened that in any way left them thinking that he was worth paying attention to.

Karma swirled around Ji Yin, and although it was impossible to see his expression clearly, he was surely surprised.

As for Fan Dong'er, a strange light shone in her eyes, but her expression was placid. She radiated a sense of pureness and holiness, and at the same time, seemed cold and distant. However, her incredible beauty made it so that anyone who looked at her couldn't help but be instantly attracted to

her, and would want to embrace her as a wife.

The person who Meng Hao resented was not Song Luodan, but rather, the old man next to him. Twice so far, he had used sinister needles to attack Meng Hao. Meng Hao suddenly stretched his hand out in a claw-like motion which seemed similar to that used by the people he had seen plucking stars. Immediately, his hand seemed to become enormous, and he grabbed the needle out of the air.

Meng Hao had only gained a smattering of enlightenment about the Star Plucking Magic. If he completely came to understand it, and also had a sufficient cultivation base, he would actually be able to reach up and pluck heavenly bodies out of the starry sky!

As soon as he grabbed the deadly needle, Meng Hao's body flickered, and he shot toward the old man. The old man laughed coldly. Instead of retreating, he began to move toward Meng Hao.

"Don't know the difference between life and death? Allow me to educate you!"

"Old codger!" growled Meng Hao, summoning the roc. In response, the old man waved his hand, causing a gray aura to spread out that contained Immortal qi.

"Suppress!" said the old man.

"I'll be doing the suppressing!" replied Meng Hao. His cultivation base rumbled, and his Immortal qi roared as it filled his body. Immediately, everyone in the area was completely shocked.

The Immortal qi caused a huge rumbling roar to fill the air, and the old man's face flickered with astonishment.

"What sect or clan are you from?!"

Meng Hao didn't respond. As the Immortal qi swirled, he performed an incantation gesture and then pushed his hand out in front of him. The Ninth Mountain rumbled out, crushing down toward the old man.

"Not gonna tell me?" snorted the old man. "Well, don't blame me for

eradicating you!" Suddenly, a Dharma Idol appeared behind him, the image of some powerful deity, a middle-aged man with an incredible bearing. Immediately, everything around him was thrown into chaos.

As Meng Hao and the old man closed in on each other in midair, Meng Hao let out a shout, and his own Dharma Idol appeared. The power that came from being half a step into true Immortality erupted out, transforming into an incredible pressure that weighed down on the old man. His face fell, and he shot backward using a magical technique. The killing intent in Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and he waved his right hand, causing eight black-colored medicinal pills to fly out. As soon as they hit the old man, they exploded.

Blood sprayed from his mouth, and his face fell. He had been seriously injured, and was just about to flee, when Meng Hao, moving at incredible speed, descended upon him. His right hand unleashed the Star Plucking Magic, and the old man let out a furious howl. He raised his right hand, and what appeared to be the sun, moon, and other heavenly bodies could be seen in the palm that he sent surging toward Meng Hao

The man let out a miserable howl; at the same time, Meng Hao coughed up blood and staggered backward. The lightning cauldron appeared in his hand, lightning danced, and he vanished as he switched places with Fan Dong'er, who had been attempting to sneak into the temple during the chaos of the fighting.

When he reappeared, Meng Hao stood tall and straight in front of the main gate of the temple, blood oozing out of his mouth. He seemed to be in command of everything, and when he stamped his foot onto the ground, everything trembled. At this point, he stretched out his right hand and made a claw-like gesture.

Three claw images appeared; it almost looked as if some ancient beast were awakening. The claws shot up into the air along with his Dharma Idol.

The huge attack surged toward Li Ling'er and Fang Donghan of the Fang Clan, who had just been preparing to charge toward him.

Amidst the rumbling booms, Song Luodan's Dao Protector up in midair suddenly let out a miserable shriek. He had just noticed that, shockingly, a needle was sticking out of his hand! It was the same needle he had just tried to use to kill Meng Hao!

The decaying power of the needle was just as effective on the old man!

"NOO!!" he shrieked, terrified. The flesh on his face was already starting to decay and fall off into bits of ash. Terror filled him. He was well aware of how quickly the vicious poison on the needle worked. In the blink of an eye, the poison contaminated all of his aura.

As his screams echoed out, the crowds gasped. The old man's body collapsed. All of his flesh and blood turned into nothing but drifting ash....

Instantly, complete silence fell.

This old man was no ordinary person. He was a Dao Protector of the Song Clan, a powerful expert with an Immortal Realm cultivation base. He had opened dozens of meridians, and yet now... he died in this place... at the hands of a Spirit Realm cultivator.

It was only an accident, only a chance occurrence, had only occurred because his cultivation base was sealed. But regardless of those things... he was dead!

Dead at the hands of Meng Hao!

"Song Luodan's Dao Protector... just died!?"

"He... he actually killed a Dao Protector!"

"Who is this guy? He can't be some random person, and he's definitely not from the lands of South Heaven. He must be a Chosen from some outside sect!"

"But he doesn't look familiar. I've never seen him before...."

Even as the buzz of conversation rose up, Zhixiang looked on with wide eyes, astonished. Her cultivation base had originally been in the Immortal Realm, but after acquiring the Demon Immortal Body, she had pushed herself down into the Spirit Realm to reestablish her cultivation and gain a

chance at even more power in the future. As such, she was far more powerful than she had been last time she was in the Spirit Realm. Even still, there was no way she could attack and kill a false Immortal.

“Who are you!?” Zhao Yifan suddenly asked.

Ji Yin looked at Meng Hao, as did Li Ling’er, as well as Wang Mu, who still hadn’t made a move yet. All of the Chosen from the various sects and clans, including Taiyang Zi, were all staring over at Meng Hao.

As for Song Luodan, he was panting in shock. His Dao Protector had just been shockingly killed, causing Song Luodan’s killing intent to grow even stronger.

Fan Dong’er hovered in midair, now in the position that Meng Hao had occupied moments before. Fury burned in her heart, but her face was placid as she calmly said, “Daoist Brother, who exactly are you? Would you mind telling us?”

Meng Hao looked out at the Chosen. He had to admit that these people were strong. However, he still felt like fighting, and in fact, was looking forward to something in particular.

He was looking forward to when he left the lands of South Heaven and entered the world of the Chosen outside. He couldn’t wait to see what kind of waves he would stir up then.

He looked calmly at the chosen of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, well aware that after this decisive battle, his name would surely spread rapidly until everyone knew who he was.

“Call me Meng Hao!”

# Chapter 815: Fan Dong'er

All cultivators in the lands of South Heaven knew Meng Hao's name. If the Chosen of the sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea had spent more time there, they would also know the name.

This was their first time hearing it, though, and it would remain in their memories for all eternity.

Meng Hao!

Zhixiang gazed absent-mindedly over at Meng Hao standing there by the main gate of the temple. She seemed to be recalling that young cultivator she had pushed around all those years ago, and then everything that had happened in the ancient Demon Immortal Sect.

Recalling all the memories, she couldn't help but take a deep breath. At the moment, she was the only one who knew that Meng Hao hadn't even been practicing cultivation for five hundred years.

"Not even five hundred years, and he already has Immortal qi.... Furthermore, he's... half a step into true Immortality!"

"His Dharma Idol depicts himself. His Immortality... is not false. He walks the path of true Immortality!"

"He has high aspirations. Like all of us, he is not willing to become a false Immortal. He wishes to transcend true Immortal tribulation and become a true Immortal!"

"I wonder which sect he represents here. Immortality Illumination Vines are quite rare in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Without one, his only option is to go all-out for Immortal destiny, and then wait for the once-in-10,000-years chance to achieve true Immortal Ascension."

Amidst the rumbling that filled the air, Wang Mu from the Wang Clan of Planet North Reed suddenly said, "How long have you been here?"

Meng Hao looked over at him but didn't respond. He stood there in front of the temple gate, his desire to fight burning as hot as ever.

"He's obviously been here for several days," said Song Luodan, hovering in midair, "and now he wants to prevent us from entering the Daoist rite temple!" Instantly, several Chosen flew out from the crowd, including Taiyang Zi. Multicolored lights flashed, and energy surged as they transformed into eight beams of light that shot toward Meng Hao.

"Get the hell out of the way!" The voices of these eight people were like crackling thunder.

Behind them flew Dao Protectors from their respective sects and clans, who observed the proceedings with flickering eyes. In total, a few dozen people were now closing in on Meng Hao.

Even were Meng Hao more powerful, it would be impossible to do much against so many peak experts. Even Meng Hao's father could never have imagined that going to the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple would end him up in such a trial by fire.

Meng Hao's father had assumed he would end up fighting alongside everyone. He had also assumed that arriving early would provide Meng Hao with some advantages, but he'd never imagined that the primary good fortune of the entire place could be acquired in less than a month.

And yet... Meng Hao had done exactly that.

Right now, he couldn't back down. He couldn't allow people to enter the temple itself. As the dozens of people bore down on him, Meng Hao suddenly slapped his bag of holding to produce several dozen black-peeled pills, which he immediately threw out in front of him. As they banged against each other in the air, they exploded violently.

Any one of those medicinal pills could produce an astonishing level of power, but dozens exploding together caused the ground to quake and the mountains to tremble. A deafening roar filled the air as blood sprayed out of the mouths of everyone near the explosion. There were even two people whose bodies were ripped to pieces.

Bloodcurdling screams filled the air.

"It was him! It was him!" cried Taiyang Zi, his voice shrill. "He's the one

“who buried all those black-peeled medicinal pills that we encountered!” Taiyang Zi’s arm had been completely vaporized in the explosion.

The people who had been injured on the path to the temple looked over at Meng Hao with killing intent flickering in their eyes. They had had their suspicions when Song Luodan’s Dao Protector died, but everything had happened so fast that there was no way to confirm the details.

Now, though, they immediately recognized the black-peeled medicinal pills, which were the same as those buried outside. New hatreds piled onto old ones.

Immediately, more people flew into the air to attack Meng Hao.

There were quite a few others, including Fang Yunyi, who flew toward the wall of the temple in an attempt to enter that way. Just before entering, Fang Yunyi was overwhelmed by a terrifying sensation, and stopped in place. The others, however, more than ten of them, unhesitatingly flew through the gaps in the walls.

As soon as they entered the run-down courtyard, they began to tremble, and then screamed miserably. Their bodies instantly began to decay, and in the blink of an eye, they had transformed into pools of black liquid.

Seeing this caused all the onlookers’ minds to spin, and their faces to fall. Some of the people who had just died were Dao Protectors, and even they had been powerless to fight back, and been killed instantly.

“You can only get in through the main gate! No other way is permitted!”

“The main gate is the only path!”

“Meng Hao is blocking the main gate, and all the incredible stuff is obviously on the other side! Kill him so we can get in!”

Now that it was revealed that there was only one entrance, the pressure on Meng Hao was even greater. Booms rang out constantly. Even with the powerful black-peeled medicinal pills, Meng Hao would be incapable of holding out for much longer. After all, he didn’t have very many pills left.

Killing intent bore down on him from all sides, but Meng Hao didn’t

retreat. Instead, he stayed as close to the main gate as possible. Zhao Yifan's sword qi surged mightily, and then transformed into the shape of a sword, surrounded by a lake of smaller swords. He then shot toward Meng Hao at top speed, causing everyone else to move to the side to make way for him. As for Meng Hao, he immediately felt an intense sense of deadly crisis.

"This guy is strong!" he thought. Blood oozed out of his mouth, and he was injured in several places. Seeing that this was not the time to make a final stand, Meng Hao glanced at the incoming Zhao Yifan, and then his eyes flickered as he retreated back through the gate.

As soon as Meng Hao entered the temple gate, Zhao Yifan's sword arrived like a blazing sun, sword qi glittering magnificently. Those behind him looked on with gleaming eyes as the temple gate was opened. Immediately, everyone surged forward to enter the temple.

However, in the instant that Meng Hao entered the temple, a monstrously murderous aura exploded up next to him. Killing intent and icy coldness appeared, along with a Devilish will. Writhing black smoke appeared underneath the evening sky.

A figure that looked exactly like Meng Hao suddenly walked out from behind him.

Meng Hao's second true self!

He walked out of the temple gate and waved his hand, causing the Wooden Time Sword to appear. Time power rippled out in all directions as the Time Sword met Zhao Yifan's sword.

A boom echoed out. Zhao Yifan's face flickered and he fell into retreat. The second true self gave a muffled snort as he advanced. Time power spread out, causing looks of shock to appear on all of the onlookers' faces. All of them could clearly sense their longevity withering.

"A Time cultivator!!"

"Dammit, there's two of them, not just one!"

As his second true self stood outside the temple, Meng Hao produced

some medicinal pills. After consuming them, he sat cross-legged in meditation for about ten breaths' worth of time. Then he opened his eyes and walked out of the main gate to stand next to this second true self. Booms echoed out as the two of them began to fight. Astonishing power was unleashed as a massive battle unfolded.

The first person to attack his second true self was Fan Dong'er. At the same time, others attempted to charge into the main gate.

Meng Hao growled, and a blood-colored vortex appeared; the Blood Demon Grand Magic was finally completely unleashed. Instantly, everyone's faces fell, and they fell back in retreat.

Meng Hao was really an annoying headache to everyone present. His second true self had monstrous killing intent and sinister coldness. His attacks were ruthless, and he was surrounded by swirling Devilish will, as well as the power of Time. All of it was very hard to deal with.

Meng Hao fought back and forth with Fang Donghan, and explosions filled the air. In any situation where Meng Hao was on the verge of being forced away from his position in front of the gate, he would throw out black-peeled medicinal pills, which always resulted in countless angry curses.

He even used the Lightning Cauldron; whenever any Chosen were on the verge of being able to enter the temple, Meng Hao would quickly switch positions with them.

He switched places with Zhao Yifan, Fan Dong'er, Li Ling'er, Wang Mu, Taiyang Zi, Ji Yin, Fang Xiangshan... virtually all of the Chosen had opportunities to enter the temple, but Meng Hao seemed to be made of eyes, and whenever one of them got close, lighting would crackle and he would use Form Displacement Transposition.

By now, it was getting dark, and a cold wind sprang up. The vine in the courtyard once again drooped down and began to swing back and forth. Black blood dripped onto the ground, and tendrils of green smoke began to rise up from inside the well.

The oil lamp once again began to burn tenuously inside the temple hall,

and countless projected images appeared. When all the newcomers saw this, they gasped. As for Meng Hao, he could feel the pulsing cold coming from behind him.

It was at this point that Fan Dong'er's eyes glittered. Suddenly, the image of a door appeared in her pupils.

"In the gap between yin and yang, Ninth Sea God!" Suddenly her entire body appeared to be sucked into her own pupils! She vanished, and when she reappeared, she was inside of the courtyard!

In that instant, Meng Hao's expression flickered. He tried to use Form Displacement Transposition, but for the first time ever, it failed!

Fan Dong'er's expression was one of indifference as she prepared to enter the temple hall. Meng Hao immediately flew toward her, extending his hand in a claw-like gesture. This left the main gate exposed, and his second true self was incapable of holding his position alone. In that short bit of time, one of the Dao Protectors managed to slip into the courtyard.

When that happened, he immediately screamed and vanished into a pool of black liquid.

This sudden turn of events caused everyone on the outside to gasp, and cease any aspirations of entering.

Meng Hao didn't have time to consider what had just happened. He transformed into a huge roc that shot aggressively toward Fan Dong'er.

"Dammit!" he thought. "I forgot whether that crazy old man said to prevent people from entering the temple as a whole, or just the temple hall!!" Furious, he called his second true self to join him in his attack.

His second true self's eyes glittered. Everyone looked on raptly as the second true self entered the main gate without any problem.

Seeing Meng Hao's second true self nearing, Fan Dong'er's face flickered.

"How can he get in here too!?" she said. "Ah, he's not a cultivator, he's your clone!"

Rumbling filled the air. Fan Dong'er's face was as indifferent as ever as she began to fight back and forth with Meng Hao. In the blink of an eye, there were more than a hundred exchanges. Everyone on the outside watched with glittering eyes. A random cultivator tried to use a special magical technique to enter through the main gate, but the result was that he died screaming. By now, everyone understood the situation.

"You can enter during the daytime, but not during nighttime!"

"Dammit, Fan Dong'er realized this earlier, so she didn't use her divine ability until yin and yang transposed, and night replaced day! That's when she entered!"

"She let Meng Hao use Form Displacement Transposition on her a few times before to get him used to thinking it would work on her!"

"Her scheming ability is so profound! I hate those people from the Ninth Sea God World!"

# Chapter 816: Battling the Goddess

Everyone stood outside the courtyard, looking in with glittering eyes.

Within the courtyard, Meng Hao and his second true self were locked in combat with Goddess Fan Dong'er of the Ninth Sea God World. Off to the side, the vine swung back and forth, and laughter could be heard as the black blood dripped onto the ground.

At the same time, strands of black hair danced through the air. Countless Dao Projections appeared. Some sat in meditation, some concocted medicinal pills, and some employed Daoist magic. The copper lamp flickered weakly, illuminating the area. The crumbling statue of the divinity appeared to be emitting some faint, divine aura.

This was not the first night that these people had spent in the vicinity of the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple. However, when they caught sight of the Dao Projections, many people made hoarse exclamations.

“Passing down Daos!”

“Those Dao Projections are passing down Daos! If we can just get inside, we can acquire new Daos!”

“The Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple is full of good fortune!”

“Dammit! I wonder how many days Meng Hao was here for before we arrived. From the look of it, he already got the greatest good fortune of all, the Immortal Ancient Daoist Medallion!”

Outside, conversations buzzed. Inside, Meng Hao and his second true self had already fought over a hundred rounds with Fan Dong'er. Booming echoed out, and Fan Dong'er frowned as she was constantly pushed back in retreat, unable to get close to the temple hall. Not only that, she was actually being forced to the point where she might get shoved out the main gate.

Meng Hao had originally been extremely nervous. However, after seeing that everything in the temple hall remained the same even after Fan Dong'er entered the courtyard, he was able to let out a sigh of relief.

“The crazy old man must have meant the temple hall and not the courtyard!” he thought. Eyes gleaming, he stretched out his hand toward Fan Dong’er in a claw-like gesture.

Fan Dong’er was getting angry. She snorted lightly and then lifted the Blue Lotus in her hand. Brilliant light shone out that seemed to contain blessings. It formed Immortal qi, which she sucked in through her eyes, ears, nose and mouth. Then, golden light began to shine out from her eyes. She looked at Meng Hao and said a single word.

“Suppress!”

That single word caused Meng Hao’s pupils to constrict as he felt an incredible force come into existence around him. It instantly began to entangle him; even his second true self could feel its interference.

Fan Dong’er’s expression was cool as she prepared to enter the temple hall.

“Emerge!” Meng Hao shouted, and rumbling could be heard as his Dharma Idol appeared, shining with boundless radiance and surrounded by a great Dao. The Dharma Idol’s light shone up into the sky, and it seemed as if countless Immortal Divinities were sitting cross-legged around it, meditating. A snapping sound rang out as the invisible fetters were destroyed. Meng Hao shook himself free, then stretched his right hand out to use the Star Plucking Magic.

All it took was one snatching motion, and Fan Dong’er, who was still in mid-stride heading toward the temple hall, was dragged back to him.

Her body was completely beyond her own control as she flew through the air. Just when she seemed about to slam into Meng Hao’s hand, she gave a cold snort and performed an incantation with her left hand. She pointed to the ground, and a vast sea appeared beneath her, from within which more than ten roaring sea dragons burst out.

Meng Hao’s Star Plucking Magic dissipated, but by that point, his second true self had closed in. He waved his sleeve, and a boom could be heard as the air around Fan Dong’er shattered. Blood oozed from the corners of her mouth as she was sent staggering backward. In the meantime, Meng Hao

performed an incantation gesture and pointed out.

The Blood Demon Grand Magic vortex instantly appeared. Both Meng Hao and his second true self were on the attack. All of the rapid changes in the battle were dazzling to the eye. There was no hesitation on anyone's part, and attacks were made with complete confidence and speed.

RUUUMMMBLE!!

Fan Dong'er's face fell. Meng Hao's Blood Demon Grand Magic filled her with dread. She performed a double-handed incantation, causing a bright light to appear that seemed to shine down from the sky above. It descended to form the image of a mermaid behind Fan Dong'er.

The mermaid had extremely long hair, and was incredibly beautiful, and actually resembled Fan Dong'er somewhat, except that she wasn't wearing any clothes whatsoever. Her bottom half was covered with scales, but as a whole, she emanated an enticing aura that would cause anyone to be attracted to her.

"So high and mighty, yet you summon something without clothes?" said Meng Hao sternly, glancing at the Dharma Idol. "How scandalous!"

"You glib lowlife!" she replied evenly. "One look and I could tell that you were a lecher!" She performed an incantation, causing her Dharma Idol's eyes to shine with golden light.

"Ninth Sea God Lightning!" The four words echoed like thunder, and immediately caused four bolts of golden lightning to crackle down toward Meng Hao.

His eyes narrowed; these Chosen from the Ninth Mountain and Sea were all incredibly powerful. He had long since ceased to look down on them. He knew that he couldn't view them as being ordinary peak Dao Seeking cultivators. These were all people who had high aspirations; they wanted to achieve true Immortal Ascension.

There were even some of them who had clearly practiced cultivation for many years, but were intentionally holding their cultivation bases back to wait for Immortal destiny.

Some of them gave Meng Hao a feeling of impending crisis. One was Zhao Yifan, and another was Fan Dong'er.

"There are many Chosen, and powerful experts are as numerous as the clouds," he thought. "My path of cultivation has just begun; the vast world is just now opening up to me...." The desire to fight burned hot in his eyes. He truly couldn't wait to step foot out of the lands of South Heaven into the starry sky, to contend with the Chosen of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

"Today is just a sneak peek," he thought. His body flickered as he sprang into motion. His Dharma Idol roared and grew even larger than before, and then sent a right hand speeding toward Fan Dong'er.

The four bolts of golden lightning sent out shocking ripples, but they were all obstructed Meng Hao's Dharma Idol.

Echoes rattled out, and Fan Dong'er's face fell. The second true self closed in along with a river of Time power, bursting with a murderous aura. Killing intent raged as he launched a vicious attack that very nearly sliced Fan Dong'er's neck open.

"Just who is this Meng Hao...?" she thought. "There's no need to even mention this clone of his. He himself is incredibly powerful, plus he has a Dharma Idol that depicts himself. Based on his power, he must be half a step into true Immortality!"

"At the moment he still hasn't merged back with his clone. When that happens...." Fan Dong'er's eyes flickered.

"He seems to be concerned with people entering the temple hall. Could it be that there is some legacy process underway inside, and he doesn't want anyone to interfere? I must disrupt that legacy!"

"I can't let a fifth Conclave disciple appear in this Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple!" Her eyes flickered with coldness.

"Ninth Sea God Will!" she said, retrieving a conch shell from her bag of holding. The conch shell immediately began to blaze with intense light that caused everything to tremble. The music of a great Dao began to spread out in all directions.

Everyone on the outside had long since been shaken by the intensity of the fighting inside. In addition, dread of Meng Hao had taken root in their hearts.

"To be able to fight with Fan Dong'er of the Ninth Sea God World means that this Meng Hao... is definitely a Chosen too!"

"That's... a precious treasure of the Ninth Sea God World, the Nine Gods Conch!"

"According to legend, that conch once slew an almighty Dao Realm expert...."

"That's not the real thing, it's only a copy. However, it's still shockingly powerful!"

As the buzz of conversation filled the air outside, Meng Hao's face flickered. He could sense that this conch was intensely dangerous. His eyes flickered and he performed another incantation gesture, causing the sixth level of the Blood Demon Grand Magic to appear.

At the same time, Fan Dong'er's eyes became ice cold as she raised the conch up and blew into it. As soon as her breath entered the conch, it began to emanate a golden light, within which was a strand of Dao music.

As the music drifted through the air, it sounded like a woman singing. It expanded out amorphously, transforming into three colorful bubbles, within each of which appeared to be a magical symbol. The sky grew dark, and wind screamed as one of the bubbles floated gently toward Meng Hao. He began to tremble, and his second true self seemed to lose control of his body and stopped in mid motion. It was at this point that bubble popped.

Blood sprayed from the mouth of the second true self as a roaring sound filled his ears. As he fell back, the second bubble floated forward and then popped. Meng Hao coughed up blood, and suddenly found that he was covered with countless strips of seaweed which were growing out from his skin to cover his whole body. At the same time, the seaweed bursting from his skin caused him to bleed profusely.

His second true self trembled as he too was covered with seaweed. The

flourishing seaweed sucked away at Meng Hao's life force, causing it to grow longer, and even take root in the ground. As a result, Meng Hao and his second true self were rapidly being rooted in place.

People outside of the courtyard gasped.

"The Curse of the Ninth Sea!"

"This Meng Hao... is going to perish!"

Fan Dong'er coughed up a mouthful of blood and staggered backward a few steps, her face pale; she had payed an incredible price in order to blow on the conch shell.

She took a deep breath as she looked over at Meng Hao and his second true self entangled in the seaweed. Her expression calm, she turned and hurried toward the temple hall.

Just when she was on the verge of stepping into the temple hall, a tremor ran through Fan Dong'er. The mud beneath her feet suddenly began to emanate a black mist. At the same time, a huge rumbling sound filled the entire area.

The courtyard trembled from the force of the explosion, and Fan Dong'er coughed up a mouthful of blood. Her body was completely beyond her control as she was sent flying into the air, more blood spurting out from her mouth.

"Meng Hao!" she cried, her heart filled with rage. She had been incredibly cautious in everything, but could never have imagined that Meng Hao would have buried black-peeled medicinal pills in front of the temple hall's door.

Those pills had been secretly placed there by Meng Hao as a failsafe against the people from the outside.

At the same time that Fan Dong'er was sent flying backward, the third bubble neared Meng Hao. He trembled, and his eyes filled with a cold gleam. His second true self shuddered; he slowly began to fade away and turn into Meng Hao's shadow, merging together with him.

“Fuse!” As he merged with his second true self, Meng Hao’s left eye was icy cold, whereas his right eye burned with murderous desire. The Dharma Idol behind him then changed; shockingly, half of it became completely black!

To everyone looking at it, it no longer looked holy, but rather, like a mixture between an Immortal and a Devil!

Rumbling sounds could be heard as the third bubble popped. However, at the same time, Meng Hao freed himself from the seaweed and launched a counterattack in the form of a punch.

A huge explosion filled the air and Meng Hao coughed up a mouthful of blood. Nonetheless, a bright gleam could be seen in his eyes as his hand snaked out toward the beautiful Fan Dong’er.

Fan Dong’er’s face flickered. She had been seriously injured, and now that Meng Hao had freed himself, she had no choice but to retreat from of the courtyard.

It was then that Meng Hao’s hand latched onto her.

“Trying to get away?”

# Chapter 817: Here You Go, Inky!

The Star Plucking Magic suddenly sprang to life, and Fan Dong'er was snatched up and dragged back by Meng Hao before she could escape from the courtyard. A look of vicious hatred could be seen on her face, and she quickly performed a double-handed incantation, causing the conch shell to appear again!

Just when she was about to blow it, Meng Hao flung her forcefully toward the well in the courtyard.

"Why don't you get in that well and blow your shell for my Inky!" he said.

Fan Dong'er's face filled with shock as, before she could blow the conch, she descended into the well, her body completely out of her control.

At the same time, Meng Hao performed an incantation, summoning the Ninth Mountain and sending it rumbling down toward the well.

A miserable shriek rang out from inside the well as the Ninth Mountain slammed down and sealed the mouth of the well, followed by rumbling booms. Meng Hao flitted up to the peak of the mountain, where he sat down cross-legged, his face somewhat pale. The murderous gleam in his right eye vanished, and boundless black mist surged out from within him, which then transformed once again into his second true self.

Blood oozed out from the sides of Meng Hao's mouth, and his second true self's eyes were somewhat dimmer than usual.

This was a result of the backlash from forcing a separation before fully fusing.

Everyone outside the courtyard was thoroughly shocked, and stared at Meng Hao in amazement.

"He... he actually sealed the Goddess of the Ninth Sea God World inside a well?"

"If I remember correctly... that head which looks like it's been soaking in water for millions of years... came out from that well!"

"Dammit, I should kill him for treating the Goddess like that!"

As the buzz of conversation filled the air, Zhao Yifan's eyes flickered. He stared at Meng Hao, his desire for combat growing ever stronger. After all, he lived to fight!

"If you're good enough to suppress Fan Dong'er," he thought, "then... I can't wait for day to break so that we can fight!"

Song Luodan couldn't help but gasp in response to what had happened, as did Wang Mu, Li Ling'er, Fang Donghan and many others. When they saw Meng Hao fight Fan Dong'er and then seal her up, it instantly left an indelible impression in their minds.

Taiyang Zi's face flickered, but, not willing to be outshone, he snorted coldly and said, "You finagled your way to victory. If you step foot outside, I'll fuse your bones and blood, burn your soul, and then kill you!"

The Chosen from the other Holy Lands and sects now had a much clearer understanding of who Meng Hao was, as did the Dao Protectors, whose eyes glittered brightly.

The night grew deeper. Meng Hao sat on top of the mountain, listening to Fan Dong'er's shrieks echoing out from down below.

She was inside the well, half submerged in water. Her scalp was numb with terror as inky black hair swirled around her. Although her surroundings were pitch black, because of her incredible cultivation base, she could just barely see the water-soaked head gazing steadily in her direction.

If you think about it, anyone in this situation would feel their blood run cold and their hair stand on end. Fan Dong'er couldn't hold back from screaming.

The tendrils of black hair began to wrap around her, and the soaking head got closer and closer....

"Meng Hao, I won't let you get away with this!" she screamed. However, it didn't matter what divine abilities or magical techniques she used, there was nothing that could get her out of the well. In fact, the more magic she

used, the more the black hair wrapped around her, and at one point, the floating head even touched her own head.

An icy sensation spread out across her skin, and Fan Dong'er's scream was even shriller than before.

As Meng Hao sat on top of the mountain, he snorted and said, "Inky, if you take care of this wench for me, then you can have her!"

By now, he had recovered most of his wounds, and he glanced over to look into the temple hall, at the bronze lamp which, thanks to Fan Dong'er's failure to enter the temple hall, had not been extinguished.

A strange light shone in his eyes, and suddenly a bashful gleam could be seen within.

"These Chosen all have lovely treasures on them, don't they...." He licked his lips and smiled, which the crowds on the outside found very surprising.

"What is Meng Hao smiling like that for?"

"Hmm. That smile looks... bashful! Is something fishy going on...?"

Meng Hao flew down off of the mountain and, as everyone watched, dug a hole and carefully put some black-peeled medicinal pills in it. Then, he cautiously stood on top of it, looked up, and extended his hand. The Lightning Cauldron appeared.

Electric light glittered, spreading out across his body, and the bashfulness in his smile grew even more apparent as he looked out at the crowd with anticipation.

"Dammit, Meng Hao's about to pull a con!"

"He has that Form Displacement Transposition cauldron, and black-peeled medicinal pills under his feet. If you step on that pill lightly, nothing happens. But when he switches positions with someone, the slightest force will cause it to explode!!"

"Fudge! How could someone be so evil!?"

"Shameless! I've never seen a bastard as shameless as him!"

Everyone in the crowd began to back up, their faces flickering with various expressions. Meng Hao's eyes finally came to rest on Taiyang Zi, whose face instantly went white, and his eyes wide. Before he could say anything, lighting from Meng Hao's cauldron flashed, and he switched places with Taiyang Zi.

The instant the change occurred, Taiyang Zi appeared in the middle of the courtyard, screaming. Apparently, this method of entering the courtyard did not violate the restrictive spells, so he was not instantly transformed into a pool of blood. However, as soon as his foot made contact with the medicinal pills, four or five of them instantly exploded, and he was engulfed in black mist.

Taiyang Zi let out a bloodcurdling shriek, along with a spray of blood. Meng Hao's second true self instantly closed in on him.

As for Meng Hao, as soon as he appeared outside the courtyard, he instantly produced his war chariot. Rumbling filled the air as he shot back into the courtyard.

Only an afterimage remained in the spot he had just occupied, which was then instantly inundated by various divine abilities and magical techniques.

"Don't be so polite, Fellow Daoists!" he called out, looking back at the crowd and waving. "I don't need your gifts, really!" The ripples from the explosions couldn't catch up with him, leaving the onlookers so frustrated that their gums itched.

"Shameless!!"

"How could he have such a high cultivation base but be so despicable!?" Numerous such curses filled the air.

Meng Hao just smiled nonchalantly and hummed a little tune as he watched his second true self grab hold of Taiyang Zi and restrain him.

When Taiyang Zi saw Meng Hao approaching, he began to tremble, and his eyes shone with a brilliant light.

"I'm from the Holy Land of Mount Sun! Our founder was Patriarch Sun

—”

SMACK!

Meng Hao walloped Taiyang Zi directly across the side of the face, causing blood to spray from his mouth, along with a couple teeth. He turned back to look at Meng Hao, a vicious expression of madness on his face.

“From the moment I started practicing cultivation,” said Meng Hao, “I’ve heard Chosen like you say things like that when they’re about to die. Do you know how annoying it is!?” Thinking about how often he had heard words similar to those uttered by Taiyang Zi, he kicked Taiyang Zi sharply with his right foot.

“Didn’t you just say you were going to burn my bones and blood, then roast my soul?” Meng Hao kicked down again.

The shocked crowd looked on, trembling, as Taiyang Zi’s howls entered their ears. The Dao Protectors and other cultivators from Mount Sun were enraged, and several of them flew forward.

“Stay your hand!!”

“Dammit, if you harm him, you’ll call a great disaster down on yourself that will affect your entire clan!”

“Once the sun comes up, you’re dead! No one will be able to save you!”

The two Mount Sun Dao Protectors stood outside the courtyard, glaring at Meng Hao and threatening him with gruesome words. In response, Meng Hao kicked Taiyang Zi again, provoking another miserable shriek, then turned and stared at the two Dao Protectors.

“I’m from the archaic Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite! My dad is—” Meng Hao suddenly stopped talking and cleared his throat. Quite a few hateful looks appeared among the crowd, especially from the people from Mount Sun. It was quite obvious that Meng Hao had just been mocking Taiyang Zi’s words from moments ago.

Meng Hao grabbed Taiyang Zi and dragged him over to the well. He

lifted the mountain and then said, “Why don’t you and the wench fool around together down there!”

Taiyang Zi’s eyes went wide, and he let out a panic-stricken yelp as he struggled against Meng Hao.

Meng Hao cleared his throat and then said, “Alright, I’ll give you one last chance. You probably have a lot of magical items on you, right?”

“Let me go, and you can have them all!” Taiyang Zi blurted. He was truly frightened; down below, he could see Fan Dong’er and the soaking head, which was obviously a mysterious evil spirit connected to the Daoist rite temple.

“Hey, I’m a gentleman and a man of my word!” replied Meng Hao sternly. “What makes you think that I would contaminate my Karma by stealing your magical items!?” His expression became colder so quickly that Taiyang Zi gaped in shock. However, it only took a moment for his mind to flash with understanding, and he quickly unfastened his bag of holding and held it aloft.

“Here, I’m giving it to you as a gift!”

Meng Hao took it, opened it up, and looked through its contents. His eyes lit up, after which he turned to look at the command medallion hanging at Taiyang Zi’s waist.

“Actually, that looks pretty nice....” he said.

“You can have it!”

“Eee? This thing is pretty nice too.”

“You... you can have it!”

“I’ve never seen one of these before....”

“You can have it....” Taiyang Zi was on the verge of tears as he handed his belongings over to Meng Hao one by one.

Meng Hao’s hand closed around a fist-sized chunk of golden-colored stone which emanated an intense heat and blinding light. From the feeling it gave off, it almost seemed like something was sleeping inside. When

Meng Hao swept it with his divine sense, the music of a great Dao filled his mind, and he sensed a pulsating aura of danger.

It almost seemed like this rock... was a sun!

Meng Hao's eyes widened as he looked it over. He had never seen anything quite like this particular item.

He slowly pulled the rock out of Taiyang Zi's bag of holding.

Immediately, people on the outside began to comment in astonishment.

"A treasured magical item! It's a treasured magical item from Mount Sun!!"

"Mount Sun is really getting the short end of the stick today...."

Taiyang Zi's face was pale white as he looked bitterly at the rock in Meng Hao's hand. He had never even had a chance to take it out and use it before Meng Hao took it away from him.

Meng Hao closed his eyes as he examined the rock with his senses. After a moment, the heat emanating off of the rock seemed to decrease, and Meng Hao put it away. Then he opened his eyes and looked at Taiyang Zi. Eyes narrowing, he pulled out a piece of paper and a pen from within his robe, then handed them over to Taiyang Zi, whose eyes went wide with shock.

# Chapter 818: Changing Fate!

“What are you staring at? Write out a promissory note! However much you think your life’s worth, write down that many spirit stones. Although, if the amount you write down is too small, don’t forget that I have a lot of spirit stones in my bag of holding, and I might just fork them over to buy you.”

“You!!” cried Taiyang Zi, almost coughing up a mouthful of blood as he glared at Meng Hao. After a long moment, he sighed and then wrote down a huge sum onto the promissory note. Meng Hao carefully placed it with his collection of other promissory notes.

When the people in the crowd, and Taiyang Zi, saw how many promissory notes Meng Hao had in his bag of holding, they gasped.

“How many people has he conned in the past...? I can’t believe he has so many promissory notes!”

“Just where exactly is he from? He couldn’t be a cultivator from the lands of South Heaven, could he?”

“There’s no way. South Heaven is a strange place, but how could it produce a shameless bastard like that!?!?”

Taiyang Zi looked at all the promissory notes and suddenly felt a bit better about his situation. With a forced smile, he looked at Meng Hao.

“Elder Brother Meng....”

“Don’t worry,” Meng Hao said earnestly. “Meng Hao is honest with all customers, and open and aboveboard in all matters. I would definitely never use the promissory note to coerce you.” Suddenly, he lowered his voice to a whisper. “Alright, you’ve been very cooperative. Come come, tell me who among all those bastards out there you have a beef with. I’ll grab that person next.

“Choose carefully.” With that, Meng Hao stepped to the side, dug another hole, and then put some medicinal pills in it.

Taiyang Zi stared at Meng Hao with wide eyes. The crowds outside

gasped, and quite a few of their number began to back away. There were even a few who directly flew away.

Taiyang Zi was in a daze for a moment, until finally his eyes flickered and he turned to look out at the crowds. Then, his gaze locked with that of Wang Mu from the Wang Clan.

“Wang Mu!” cried Taiyang Zi, his face twisting with hatred. “He’s the one! He stole my good fortune that year. Him!”

When Wang Mu, who stood off in the distance, heard what Taiying Zi said, his eyes flickered. The Dao Protectors near him stepped forward, their eyes radiating coldness.

“Got it,” said Meng Hao. He quickly reached out and tied Taiyang Zi up, then tossed him over to the grapevine trellis. Then he produced the Lightning Cauldron, which glittered with electricity as he looked over at Wang Mu. Wang Mu instantly rotated his cultivation base with all his power.

However, in the next instant, Meng Hao shifted his gaze to Song Luodan. Instantly, the two of them vanished. Then, Song Luodan reappeared in the courtyard. However, he remained hovering in the air, and didn’t touch the ground.

“Do you really think it’s worth it to play such ridiculous games?” Song Luodan chuckled coldly. Most of the people in the crowd outside were now prepared for Meng Hao to use the Lightning Cauldron. However, it was at this moment that Meng Hao’s second true self violently stamped his foot onto the ground. Immediately, a boom could be heard as the medicinal pills beneath Song Luodan’s feet exploded.

Song Luodan coughed up blood as the explosion rippled out. He had no time to evade. His hair was thrown into disarray, and he let out a miserable shriek. At the same time, Meng Hao’s second true self closed in.

As soon as Meng Hao appeared outside, booms filled the air as Li Ling’er, Fang Yunyi, Fang Xiangshan, as well as the Ji Clan members, and even Chosen from other sects, along with their Dao protectors, all attacked.

The gleam of spell formations appeared on the ground, which had been set up in secret earlier in order to cause problems for Meng Hao.

Some people even used magical items. Massive roaring filled the area in the blink of an eye. Meng Hao coughed up a mouthful of blood, and then sped backward in the war chariot. Lightning flickered as he switched positions several times in a row before he was finally able to extricate himself. Just when he was almost back into the courtyard, a sword shot through the air toward him. The sword filled the darkness with brilliant light, and left a bright streak in the air as it bore down on Meng Hao.

The shocking sword caused Meng Hao's face to flicker. He quickly performed an incantation gesture, causing divine abilities to explode out. At the same time, his Dharma Idol appeared and blocked the sword. Rumbling shook everything as the sword unexpectedly sliced through the Dharma Idol and then slashed down onto the war chariot.

A huge boom filled the air, and blood sprayed out of Meng Hao's mouth. However, he borrowed the momentum from the blast to shoot back into the courtyard. Once inside, he coughed up another mouthful of blood and then suddenly looked up. At some point, Ji Yin had appeared right in front of the temple gate. His right hand stretched out, surrounded by swirling Karma power, clearly on the verge of passing into the courtyard.

Then, it did pass into the courtyard itself, apparently completely unaffected by the restrictive spells. Rumbling like thunder rippled out as he stretched his hand out about three inches into the courtyard. However, at that point, he could proceed no further and he slowly retracted his hand.

Many gasps could be heard from the crowd as they looked at Ji Yin, whose back was to them all, making it impossible for them to see his facial expression.

Meng Hao's pupils constricted, and his heart trembled. As of this point, he was now aware of how incredibly powerful Ji Yin was.

"Let me in, and I'll spare your life," said Ji Yin. It was hard to tell whether his voice was that of a man or a woman. However, it was completely cold-

blooded, and filled with a lust for battle.

Meng Hao smiled and wiped the blood off of his mouth. He then turned and walked over to the seriously wounded Song Luodan, who had already been restrained and tied up by his second true self.

Song Luo glared hatefully at Meng Hao, killing intent flickering in his eyes.

Meng Hao wasn't in the mood for chattering, so he simply slapped Song Luodan in the face a few times, which of course cause his rage to surge even higher. Without another word, he took Song Luodan's bag of holdings, rifled through them, and then finally then pulled out a piece of paper and a pen.

"I won't sign that thing even if you kill me!" raged Song Luodan, looking especially ferocious because of the scar running down his face.

"Won't sign it?" Meng Hao responded coolly. He turned to look over at the swinging vine, from which the sounds of faint laughter and the drip of black blood could be heard. "Lily, weren't you looking for a friend to swing with you?"

From what Meng Hao could tell, Inky and Lily had changed quite a bit ever since the crazy old man gave Meng Hao his approval.

As soon as Meng Hao spoke, the swing stopped moving. Then, the astonished Song Luodan flew up into the air, his body clearly completely out of his own control. Next, his body began to shrink; in the blink of an eye, he looked like he was seven or eight years old. Finally, he floated down to land on the vine, where he began to swing back and forth.

His expression was numb, but intense terror could be seen in his eyes.

At this point, the faint glow of dawn was just becoming visible. Soon, the strange phenomena inside the courtyard would disappear.

Killing intent flickered in the eyes of the crowd outside. This was especially true of the cultivators from Mount Sun and the Song Clan, and the various Chosen who were smitten with Fan Dong'er from the Ninth Sea God World.

Meng Hao frowned. After looking up at the sky, he walked back into the temple hall, where he looked around at the Dao Projections and the ancient bronze lamp. Finally, he sighed.

"49 days total, but only half of them have gone by. Obviously... there's no way I can keep people out of this place for that long."

"There are simply too many of them outside. So far, I've only been able to stretch things out for two days...." He stood in front of the bronze lamp and looked at the flickering flame. During the day, the flame would go out, but after having observed the item for so long, Meng Hao knew that the flame itself wasn't truly extinguished. The heart of the flame still existed.

The lamp itself only burned brightly at night.

Muttering, Meng Hao once again poured some blood into the flames, which hissed and then emitted a delicate fragrance that left him feeling enlivened after smelling it.

"I'm not supposed to let anyone come inside to touch the lamp and contaminate it with their aura. It's... fundamentally impossible to meet that requirement." Meng Hao sighed. The more he thought about it, the more it seemed completely unfeasible. Furthermore, the sky was almost bright....

Meng Hao could sense the killing intent coming from the groups outside the courtyard. He was like a thorn in their sides, someone blocking their path to good fortune. Furthermore, some of that killing intent resulted directly from him offending people.

"Well, if I have to ask for help from dad and mom because of something as trivial as this, then I'm not Meng Hao!" His eyes began to shine with a cold gleam. Before reaching Dao Seeking, he had not relied on any assistance from his father and mother. He had stepped halfway into true Immortality all by himself.

He had experienced multiple deadly situations, had battled the 10th Wang Clan Patriarch in the Milky Way Sea, had tread the narrow gap between life and death, had fought in the great war of the Southern Domain, and had risen to the pinnacle of prominence.

Those were all things that made Meng Hao feel quite proud of himself.

"Besides, my road leads beyond South Heaven, whereas dad and mom... must stay here for 100,000 years. I have to walk my path alone. If I want good fortune... I'll take the risks myself and earn it myself!"

"If I did it any differently, I'd be the same as all of those people out there." The desire to fight gleamed in his eyes. He took a deep breath, when suddenly, a new idea appeared in his mind. He stopped in place, and a strange expression filled his face.

"Wait a second....

"That crazy old man said that I couldn't let the flame be extinguished for 49 nights. He also said that I couldn't let anyone come in here to touch the lamp."

"In other words, actually stepping foot into this place isn't the problem. As long as no one touches the lamp, then the requirement will be met, right?" Meng Hao's eyes sparkled.

"If that's true, then it also goes to say that... it doesn't matter what I do; I could even take the bronze lamp away from here. As long as nobody else touches it, and it remains unextinguished, then everything will be fine."

Having reached this point in his train of thought, he began to pant. A gleam of determination appeared in his eyes, and he decided that since he couldn't prevent everyone from entering this place, he might as well... try out his new idea!

He immediately stretched his hand out and grabbed the lamp. The instant he tried to actually pick it up, he realized that the lamp was completely immovable; there was no way for him to put it in his bag of holding. A strange light flickered in his eyes as he rotated his cultivation base at full power. His Dharma Idol appeared behind him, and Meng Hao used all the power he could muster to try to pull up the bronze lamp.

Shocking rumbles could be heard coming from within the temple hall. The ground trembled and the entire temple shook. A deep, subterranean rumble could be heard, as well as the sound of laughing and crying from

the courtyard. The mountain range, and in fact, the entire land, was shaking violently.

The crowds outside the courtyard stared at the temple hall in shock.

In that instant, all of the lands of South Heaven were shaken, to the extent that the entire planet temporarily ceased to rotate!

The Milky Way Sea roared, and all the continents trembled. All the powerful experts in South Heaven were shaking in astonishment!

In the Tower of Tang, Meng Hao's father and mother were in the middle of playing a game of Go when suddenly his father's face flickered. Even as he looked up, Meng Hao's mother's face also flickered.

"That's...."

"The Immortal Ancient is in motion. Not good! There must have been some kind of accident!" Meng Hao's father rose to his feet and was just about to fly up into the air, when both he and Meng Hao's mother stopped in place. Their expressions flickered as they saw a figure approaching from off in the distance.

He had long gray hair, an ordinary-looking robe, and looked completely archaic. His eyes were filled with the glow of heavenly bodies. Not only did he look like a person who existed inside a painting, he looked like the type of person who could paint a multitude of universes with a wave of his hand.

Meng Hao's parents were immediately shaken. They clasped hands and bowed.

"Xiufeng offers greetings, senior!"

"Meng Li offers respectful greetings, senior!"

This was the same man who had appeared to them on Planet East Victory, and had indicated that they should come to Planet South Heaven. He was the one who had directed them to guard the planet for 100,000 years. He was... an Outsider!

If Meng Hao were here, he would immediately recognize that this person

was... Shui Dongliu! 1

"The chance for Immortality was consumed by the Dao of Heaven," he murmured. "The Dao path has overlapped with the ancient. I saw nine fluttering butterflies once again flying in approach 2. I saw the one who has vanished; and the look in his eyes as he turned his head to look back.... It can't be predicted anymore, and I can't see through it anymore.... He... actually managed to change his fate!" A strange gleam appeared in his eyes as he gazed toward the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple in the distant mountains.

\*

1. Here is a brief refresher about Shui Dongliu. He was introduced in [chapters 194](#) and [197](#) during the Song Clan search for a son-in-law. He helped Meng Hao seal the Resurrection Lily into a painting in [chapter 208](#). Er Gen joked about him in the interlude after [chapter 222](#). He made a super brief appearance in [chapter 383](#), when Meng Hao refined the Eyeless Larva. He prevented Ji Nineteen from severing Meng Hao's Karma in [chapter 425](#). Finally, he helped Meng Hao acquire the Eternal Stratum in [chapter 693](#).
2. This is not the first time nine butterflies have been mentioned in the story. If you don't remember you can check out [chapters 555, 587, 613, 652](#) and [chapter 664](#).

# Chapter 819: A Flickering Vision of Ancient Times

At the same time, within the Inner Ring of the Milky Way Sea, the water was boiling. A gray fog suddenly rose up, which spread out in all directions, filled with an aura of death.

An ancient ship slowly pierced through the fog, and as it did it seemed to cause flickering images of countless worlds to appear within the fog.

It almost seemed like the ship had just come from ancient times, and was now making an appearance in this day and age.

At the prow of the ship was an old man wearing a dilapidated suit of armor. His long hair was the color of silver, and it was impossible to see his facial features. It was only possible to see a pair of blank eyes that seemed to be staring off into eternity, looking for the answer to some unanswerable question.

Suddenly, the old man raised his head up and looked in the direction of the ancient Daoist rite temple off in the Eastern Lands.

“Who... has shaken the world?”

All of the ripples which were spreading out throughout Planet South Heaven suddenly vanished.

Outside the Tower of Tang, Meng Hao’s parents listened to Shui Dongliu’s words, and were shaken.

“Impossible to predict. He has changed his destiny.

“You two must not interfere; too many Karmic connections would be detrimental to him.... He... is connected to South Heaven by destiny.”

“Senior....” said Meng Hao’s father, his voice anxious as he looked at Shui Dongliu.

“The tribulation.... is coming,” murmured Shui Dongliu. “I have seen countless corpses, and endless rivers of blood. I have seen the calamity which will leave only nine mountains in the starry sky. That calamity... is

not very far off.

"The existences that were once subdued cannot cross over from ancient times, but the ones who escaped subdual will return full of vengeance....

"When was the enmity created? What was its root cause? Forgotten.... They've all forgotten everything.... Nobody remembers anymore....

"They... enslaved the Dao of Heaven. And they are on their way." He shook his head slowly.

Meanwhile, in the depths of the mountains, in the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple, the ground was quaking outside of the temple. Everyone was astonished as they listened to the shrill sound of weeping mixed with laughter, and the incredible roaring coming from deep beneath the ground. Then they saw the temple itself shaking. Cracks spread out, and suddenly, an illusory Daoist rite temple appeared once again.

Inside the temple hall, Meng Hao's face was pale. All he had wanted to do was to pick up the bronze lantern, so the intense rumbling, and the quaking of the land, caused his eyes to go wide.

Furthermore, he now could not separate his hand from the bronze lantern; intense pain stabbed into his hand, causing the skin to be slit open and blood to spray out, which was then absorbed by the bronze lantern.

After absorbing the blood, the lantern's flame burned even more radiantly. It emanated a red glow which seemed capable of piercing the air and tearing open the barrier to ancient times. Meng Hao was suddenly able to sense that everything was in motion.

The images around him began to rotate, spinning faster and faster, until they were roaring violently in the form of a vortex.

It was hard to say how long it lasted, but at a certain point the vortex suddenly ceased moving. Shaking, Meng Hao looked around to see... the exact same ancient Daoist rite temple that he had seen before. He could hear the sound of a sermon being given about the Dao, and everyone sat

cross-legged beneath a river of stars.

On the altar was an old man who waved his hand, causing everything in Heaven and Earth to suddenly reverse; an enormous “Immortal 仙” character appeared....

Shockingly, the “Immortal” superimposed over Meng Hao. It was as if the oil lamp in his hand had turned into the mountain, while he was the person! Together, they transformed into the character... “Immortal!” 1

Countless eyes fell upon him, and Meng Hao’s mind spun. Everything that was happening was far too incredible, and he could barely believe it.

Next, the lamp began to absorb more and more of his blood. His face went pale as the world around him spun. Rumbling filled the air as everything once again ceased moving. Shockingly, Meng Hao found himself looking at yet another world.

An enormous hand could be seen in the sky, which smashed directly into the ground. There were countless cultivators locked in deadly combat; they attacked by hauling stars out of the sky and transforming them into divine abilities.

To defend, enormous swaths of earth were ripped up and hurled into the sky.

There was an enormous, amorphous figure who had stars shining in its forehead. Next to it were innumerable furred creatures with long tentacles, as large as planets, wreaking death in all directions.

It was impossible for Meng Hao to tell who was friend or foe. There were multiple powers all fighting each other. Far off in the distance, he saw an enormous rift tearing open to reveal... nine suns!

They were nine suns that caused the starry sky to tremble, caused the void to shatter into fragments, and caused all life to be extinguished!

Unexpectedly, the nine suns were hauling an enormous stone statue through the rift. The statue depicted a man who had ordinary features and yet emanated an unforgettable aura!

An indescribably large shadow began to spread out, seemingly intent on covering up the entire starry sky. From the look of it, it was possible to see that it was something completely unique and bizarre.

People began to cry out in alarm, to shout about the Dao of Heaven....

Even more shocking, from a different direction, nine butterflies could be seen flying in approach. They were indescribably gargantuan, larger than anything else. In the moment they appeared, what seemed like portals that led to other worlds opened up on their bodies, from within which emerged clouds of figures. Even more shocking was that behind the butterflies, Meng Hao could see what seemed like a huge landmass which was threatening to fill the entire sky as it approached.

"The world of Immortals is the source of all chaos! Immortals are the pinnacle of evil!" It was impossible to tell who this voice that rang out in Meng Hao's vision belonged to. The only thing that he could see were the nine suns, the nine butterflies, and below them, nine shocking mountains.

Massive rumbling filled everything, and then the vision faded away. Meng Hao's mind was reeling, and everything around him was shattered to pieces. Once again, a vortex formed, with Meng Hao in the middle of it. He reappeared from ancient times, and stepped out into the temple hall.

Almost all of his blood had been sucked out of his body into the bronze lantern. As for the lantern.... It had of its own volition floated up into the air above Meng Hao's head, where it was now flickering dimly.

It was at this point that the sky outside... grew bright!

In the moment in which dawn broke, the bronze lamp above Meng Hao's head flickered and transformed into an ember. It was not extinguished, but rather, turned into a weak, green smoke that bored into Meng Hao's mouth, nose, ears, and eyes. All of a sudden, he experienced an unprecedented clarity.

Meng Hao's mind trembled, and his eyes glittered brightly. He knew that now was not the time to hesitate. Followed by the shadow that was his second true self, Meng Hao emerged from the temple hall, flicking his sleeve to collect up Taiyang Zi and Song Luodan, who he then tossed into

his bag of holding. He glanced at the well, which was still sealed by the Ninth Mountain, and then unhesitatingly left the courtyard.

When he emerged from the main gate, he saw that everyone outside had blank expressions on their faces. Apparently, they were still caught up in the vision of ancient times. Even the sons of Ji were trembling.

Meng Hao immediately started flying. However, a beam of sword light screamed through the air toward him before he could get very far. It was none other than Zhao Yifan!

As it turned out, he was the first to awaken!

More people began to wake up, and when they saw Meng Hao, they instantly unleashed magical techniques as they chased after him.

“Hey, the Daoist rite temple is all yours!” he called. The war chariot appeared, and instantly shot forward at incredible speed. The incoming magic from his pursuers very nearly overwhelmed him.

Thankfully, he hadn’t paused for even the slightest moment; furthermore, his mind was incredibly clear because of the bronze lantern. Everyone else, even Zhao Yifan, had just come to their senses, and as such, found it difficult to employ the full power of their cultivation bases.

Rumbling filled the air, and Meng Hao coughed up a mouthful of blood. However, he was being doggedly pursued, so he shot forward at top speed toward that narrow path surrounded on either sides by high cliffs.

Unfortunately, the airspace was restricted, and it quickly became apparent that the war chariot was having difficulty staying aloft. It began to slow down rapidly as soon as he entered the narrow path, until Meng Hao was finally forced to put it away. As soon as he touched down onto the ground, he shot away like an arrow from a bow. A whizzing sound could be heard as he shot off into the distance.

There were hundreds of people pursuing him, although none of them were Chosen. Instead, they were the Dao Protectors from the various sects and clans. Only Mount Sun and the Song Clan sent all of their forces after him.

The other Chosen, after awakening, looked at the empty temple and then charged in.

As soon as they entered the place, the mountain above the well collapsed into pieces, and the desolate wail of a woman could be heard.

"Meng Hao! Things are NOT finished between us!" Fan Dong'er flowed up from within the well, her face pale and her hair disheveled. All of the other Chosen who were so smitten with her were just about to rush forward to her when suddenly, they gasped. They looked at Fan Dong'er with astonishment, and slowly began to back up.

Fan Dong'er gaped, and her face fell. It was then that she raised her right hand; a bright light flashed, and a mirror appeared. When she looked into the mirror she could see that her face, although somewhat pale, was still as beautiful as ever.

She breathed a sigh of relief. Except then....

"Dong'er, b-behind you...."

"There's someone behind you!!"

"Why... why did you carry a corpse up here on your back...?"

It was at this point that Fan Dong'er caught sight of something else in the mirror's reflection. Behind her... floated the corpse of a woman, the exact same corpse which had tormented her inside the well.

Fan Dong'er felt like her head was going to explode. She immediately flew up into the air, only to find that the corpse did exactly the same thing. It was almost as if their souls were connected; apparently, it would follow her no matter where she went.

Fan Dong'er could only imagine what it would be like if, no matter where she went, she was followed by a corpse that had been fermenting in water for millions of years.... Such a matter would completely shock the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea once word got out.

Fan Dong'er screamed....

"Meng Hao, I'm going to kill you. KILL you!!"

By this point, the other Chosen had already entered the temple hall. They looked around in shock for a moment, then immediately fled out of the temple complex. Cracks spread out rapidly, and the ground shattered into a chasm, into which the entire temple immediately fell!

Thankfully, everyone moved with enough speed that no one was caught up in the destruction. However, they all looked back in shock as the remains of the temple were sucked down into the ground. After that, the ground returned to its normal state, as if nothing had ever been there....

“Dammit! That bronze lamp that Meng Hao took was obviously a precious treasure from the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple!”

“He definitely has the Immortal Ancient Dao Medallion!”

“Get him! The airspace here is restricted, so he can’t have gotten far. Seal the entire mountain range! Lock down the air! Dig up the earth until we find him!”

\*

1. You may remember that Er Gen once broke down the character “Immortal 仙” as being made up of a person 人 and a mountain 山

# Chapter 820: Who's Trying to Steal My Business?

It took only a moment for everyone from all of the various sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea to be sent into a blur of motion. They used a variety of techniques to lock down the mountain range. They used shocking divine will, secret magics, and various divine abilities as they spread out in all directions to search for Meng Hao.

This was especially true of Fan Dong'er, who cried out shrilly as she sped through the air. Normally she was surrounded with a calm, holy air. That was gone now; any beautiful woman would be incapable of doing so when being constantly followed around by a corpse.

She could imagine how soon, news of the matter would spread throughout the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea, which made her hatred for Meng Hao rise to new heights.

As for the Chosen from the rest of the sects and clans, they were proud people, and were the type who didn't like to show inferiority to anyone. Although they were used to the constant competition and fighting with other Chosen and the dangers that came along with that, they were not used to coming up empty-handed in their endeavors. Instead, they usually compared amongst themselves to see who ended up with more good fortune than the others.

But this time... in the lands of South Heaven, when meeting Meng Hao for the first time, they also encountered another first. They came face to face with incredible good fortune, but were unable to get even a scrap of it.

And when they thought of how Meng Hao had hoodwinked them all, had run a deadly con on them, it caused them to hate him so much that their gums itched.

"Too shameless! That guy is evil to the marrow!"

"For someone as extreme as that to NOT be famous in the outside world is simply impossible! He's most likely a cultivator from Planet South

Heaven!"

"It doesn't matter who he is! We'll make him cough up the good fortune he stole from us!"

Whooshing sounds filled the air as hundreds of cultivators employed their top speed to spread out through the boundless mountains. They formed something like a huge web as they searched for Meng Hao.

Meng Hao proceeded along cautiously. Despite employing a variety of methods, he was unable to get the bronze lamp into his bag of holding. He was forced to just deal with it floating there, flickering above his head.

The land around him trembled, and divine sense swept about. Meng Hao increased his speed. These mountains were huge, and were also dotted with restrictive spells that, if accidentally triggered, would very likely kill him. Because of that, he wasn't able to maintain top speed.

As he proceeded along cautiously, his eyes gleamed brightly. Before, he had moved around in the area in front of the temple, but now the whole sprawling mountain range was open to him.

"Now that they'll be forced to come at me one by one, I'm curious to see which of these Chosen from the outside is actually the most powerful!"

Time passed by. Soon, it was midday. Meng Hao happened to be in a forested area, when suddenly his expression flickered, and he shot backward. A black arrow slammed into the ground where he had just been standing. The ground exploded, sending dirt and vegetation showering into the air. Then a cold snort could be heard.

"So, this is where you've been hiding!" someone said. A young man appeared, wearing a magnificent violet robe embroidered with dragons. He wore a crown on his head, and his cultivation base was incredible, beyond the peak of Dao Seeking. As soon as he appeared, his gaze locked onto the bronze lamp above Meng Hao's head.

"If I can subdue you, then I, Sun Hai, will achieve even more fame than before! The good fortune of the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple will belong to me!"

Next to Sun Hai was an old man who radiated an archaic aura. He seemed extremely ancient, and although he was initially unprepossessing in appearance, his eyes suddenly began to shine brightly like two suns.

Sun Hai turned to the old man and said, “Subdue him!”

The old man looked at Meng Hao and smiled. His body then surged with energy, almost as if an Immortal were inside him, sitting in meditation. As he stepped forward, ripples spread out, distorting the air around him.

Meng Hao silently turned to face the two people, and his eyes narrowed. He remembered these two; the young man was one of the Chosen he had seen back at the temple, one of the group of seven or eight who had attacked him.

“Let’s see if you’ve got the skill to suppress Meng Hao,” he said with a slight smile.

As the old man stepped forward, the world in front of Meng Hao seemed to stretch out, and then suddenly shrink back to normal. When the interchange was completed, the old man was standing directly in front of Meng Hao.

“Die!” he said coolly, extending his right hand. Something like a sun appeared in his hand, which began to emanate brilliant light. As the light enveloped Meng Hao, Meng Hao snorted coldly. Not only did he not retreat, he actually advanced, and as he stepped forward, a shadow appeared behind him that turned into his second true self. It radiated a murderous aura as it headed toward the violet-robed Sun Hai.

“Kill the old one first, then cut down the young one!” said Meng Hao coolly. His Dharma Idol appeared, bursting with the energy of a cultivation base half a step into true Immortality. The Dharma Idol’s hands lifted up and pushed out to fight back against the old man.

Rumbling filled the air, and the old man’s arms trembled. A cold light appeared in his eye that was filled with a murderous aura. His body suddenly seemed to turn weak and skinny, but an incredible energy surged out from within him. He clenched his palm into a fist and then punched out toward Meng Hao.

Off to the side, Meng Hao's second true self was already fighting with the violet-robed Sun Hai. Booms echoed and ripples spread out in all directions.

In ten short breaths of time, Meng Hao and the old man exchanged over a hundred moves. Suddenly, a blood-colored vortex appeared beneath Meng Hao, and the old man's face flickered in response. Meng Hao then shot backward, and the vortex began to speed toward the old man, apparently capable of sucking in any physical object in the area.

The old man's eyes flashed and he performed an incantation gesture. Shockingly, the illusory image of an emperor appeared behind the old man, who then waved his hand toward Meng Hao.

A look of scorn appeared on Meng Hao's face, and in the blink of an eye, he shapeshifted into a huge roc. With shocking speed, he flew past the old man toward his second true self and the violet-robed Sun Hai.

The old man's face fell, and he immediately shot after him in pursuit.

Sun Hai's face flickered, and he roared, "Wherever the Emperor stands is sovereign territory!" He performed a double-handed incantation and spit out a mouthful of blood. An emperor identical to the one behind the old man appeared behind him and took a step forward, causing the entire area to be locked down.

Meng Hao didn't say anything. He slapped his bag of holding with his right hand, causing a beast claw to appear. Using his superficial knowledge of its workings, he sent it slashing forward.

Sky and land darkened, and the screech of a cat filled the air. A black illusory cat appeared, which then clawed at the sealing power that had locked down the area. A boom filled the air as the sealing power was shattered.

In that instant, roc-form Meng Hao moved like lightning to appear directly in front of Sun Hai, whose eyes narrowed. Even as he backed up, Meng Hao closed in and slashed a claw-like hand at him, and they began to fight.

The Ninth Mountain appeared next to Meng Hao, blocking an attack from the old man. At the same time, Meng Hao unleashed the Star Plucking Magic. An enormous hand appeared which grabbed Sun Hai. Blood sprayed from his mouth, and he struggled mightily, but Meng Hao closed in on him and pushed down onto his chest. The Blood Demon Grand Magic surged, and Sun Hai screamed as his body withered up. Then Meng Hao quickly sealed him and tossed him into his bag of holding.

As he turned, the old man let out a roar of rage. His eyes were completely bloodshot as he watched Meng Hao capture the Young Lord Sun Hai. He was instantly sent into a violent rage.

“Shouting isn’t going to do you any good,” said Meng Hao with a cold laugh. “You’re not strong enough to suppress me, and yet you provoke me anyway? You’ve brought your death upon yourself.” As Meng Hao sped backward, the old man shot toward him, howling furiously. The emperor image behind him let off a shocking pressure, causing Meng Hao’s face to flicker. This old man was a Dao Protector and, despite his sealed cultivation base, was still incredibly powerful.

Meng Hao snorted coldly, and his eyes flickered. It was at this point that, all of a sudden, Wang Mu burst out from the forest behind Meng Hao. He had already been in the area when he sensed the ripples emanating out from the fighting. As soon as he appeared, his vision suddenly rippled, and electricity flashed all around him. In the next breath, he and Meng Hao had switched positions.

“Many thanks, little brother Wang,” Meng Hao laughed. He instantly disappeared into the forest. His second true self transformed into a shadow and then vanished.

Wang Mu and the enraged old man slammed into each other, causing a huge boom to rattle out. Then they turned their heads in the direction Meng Hao had disappeared, and killing intent surged. Without another word, they shot after him in pursuit.

Meng Hao grumbled to himself in irritation, then gritted his teeth and sped onward.

Two hours passed in a flash. In addition to his incredible speed, Meng Hao also had the Lightning Cauldron. As he flitted through the forest, he sent his divine sense out. The forested area was not small, and although he was being pursued, it was relatively easy for him to make his way freely through the trees.

After a while, he slapped his bag of holding with his right hand, causing the crown-wearing Sun Hai to appear.

"I'm from the Church of the Immortal Emp—"

POW!

Meng Hao slapped him across the side of the face.

Sun Hai's eyes turned red and he glared at Meng Hao, panting. However, he didn't say anything further. Meng Hao completely ignored him, and instead looked through Sun Hai's bag of holding, and then patted Sun Hai down. In the end, his eyes went wide.

"You have nothing at all?" he said angrily. "What happened on your way here, did you get robbed or something?" He felt as if he had been fooled into snatching someone who was actually poorer than himself.

Sun Hai's bag of holding had absolutely nothing in it....

Sun Hai wanted to howl with rage. As a Chosen from the Church of the Immortal Emperor, he had come to South Heaven with vast quantities of magical items, and even some very rare items. In fact, some of the magical weapons were specifically useful because of his type of cultivation base, and could push his divine abilities to the peak of their power. However... before meeting Meng Hao, he actually had been robbed in a very humiliating fashion.

That was one reason why it had been so easy for Meng Hao to capture him.

"Are all of you people from Planet South Heaven bandits!?" said Sun Hai through gritted teeth, his heart dripping with blood.

Meng Hao stared in shock. All it took was one question, and Sun Hai

revealed the truth. Meng Hao thought about it, and couldn't recall anyone in the lands of South Heaven who had tried to steal business from him. However, now that a competitor had appeared, he realized he needed to be on guard.

"Well, whatever," Meng Hao said with a slight sigh. "I guess it's just my bad luck. Now, write up a promissory note!"

"Y-you.... Forget about it! I'm not writing any promissory note!"

"You don't give me any magical items, and you won't write a promissory note?! You useless piece of crap! If it weren't for the fact that I don't want to cause any unnecessary problems for my dad and mom, I would just cut you down!" Glaring, Meng Hao reached out and grabbed him by the hair, then sealed his mouth and cultivation base, and finally, cast a minor magical spell on him that he had learned in the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect. Then, he sped off, dragging Sun Hai by the hair behind him on the ground....

Sun Hai was trembling. His cultivation base was sealed, as was his mouth. Whatever magical technique it was that Meng Hao had just used on him caused his sensitivity to pain to increase severalfold, making it so that being dragged across the ground felt like death by a thousand cuts....

# Chapter 821: Mopping Up Li Ling'er!

As he was dragged along, Sun Hai lost consciousness from the pain several times. However, the misery quickly caused him to reawaken. This was a feeling the likes of which he had never experienced before in his entire life.

Were he able to shout, he would definitely scream with incredible bitterness.

Meng Hao didn't even look at him. He gripped his hair tightly as he dragged him along, intentionally choosing a rough and difficult path to tread. Sun Hai had no choice but to bump along behind him on the ground like a writhing snake.

Soon, darkness began to fall. When everything was pitch black, the bronze lamp above Meng Hao's head suddenly trembled. Meng Hao stopped in his tracks as he sensed the blood in his body being absorbed by the lamp. His face went pale as the lamp's flame hissed to life.

The flame was dim, but it cast countless shadows in all directions. Someone far away would not be able to see it, but anyone nearby would definitely notice.

Meng Hao frowned, but after trying everything he could to prevent the light from shining out, and failing, he sighed lightly and proceeded forward with glittering eyes. Instead of leaving the mountain range, he headed deeper in, proceeding along as fast as possible.

Here, there were many more restrictive spells....

Everything was silent. There was wind, but it made absolutely no noise as it brushed across his face. Sun Hai's pain caused him to hover between life and death as Meng Hao dragged him around for several hours. By now, it was the middle of the night, and as Meng Hao walked along, he suddenly stopped in place. A sense of deadly crisis rose up, and he turned to find a woman approaching through the trees.

She was incredibly beautiful, and as she walked out from the darkness,

she looked as if she were descending from an Immortal paradise. She wore a long gown and had mark on her forehead in the shape of a willow leaf. Everything seemed to fade in comparison to her beauty, as if she were the only thing worth looking at in the world.

“Give me the Immortal Ancient Dao Medallion,” she said calmly. This was none other than Li Ling’er from Planet North Reed. When she looked over at Meng Hao, her eyes seemed to be filled with heavenly bodies.

As she walked along, the grass swayed gently and grew taller, and flowers bloomed, as if her aura breathed life into everything around her.

“When Fan Dong’er was around, I didn’t notice that you were also really quite pretty,” said Meng Hao, his eyes widening. Li Ling’er was another of the people who had ganged up to attack him earlier, and in the brief interchange with her, he could tell that she was beyond ordinary.

There was something dreadful lurking within her aura, although the only physical thing that drew Meng Hao’s attention... was the willow mark on her forehead.

However, what caused his eyes to become like sharp blades was the fact that... there were no Dao Protectors standing next to her.

He clearly remembered that back when she stood outside of the courtyard, she had been followed by Dao Protectors. That there were none with her now indicated that she was extremely self-confident. Apparently there were quite a few other Chosen who possessed such confidence.

Zhao Yifan was the same, as was Ji Yin. Fan Dong’er was like that, and now this Li Ling’er.

Li Ling’er’s expression didn’t change at all in response to Meng Hao’s words, as if she didn’t care about them at all. She continued to walk forward, an intense energy surging out that caused an enormous, shocking tree to appear behind her.

The tree was wizened and withered, and a vine wrapped around it that looked like a flood dragon. The tree itself was pitch-black, but its leaves were emerald-green.

“Are you going to give it to me, or not?” she asked. Her expression seemed calm, but her eyes were filled with arrogant pride as she gazed at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao sighed, and then said, “I want to give it to you, but... I’m already married.”

His words caused Li Ling’er’s jaw to involuntarily drop. Meng Hao’s response had absolutely nothing whatsoever to do with her actual question.

Even as she gaped in shock, Meng Hao’s eyes began to glow brightly. His Dharma Idol appeared behind him, and he shot forward in a flash, clenching his hand into a fist and punching toward Li Ling’er.

Sun Hai had already been tossed off to the side. He was bound up, so all he could do was look on with anticipation as Meng Hao and Li Ling’er began to fight.

“You aboriginal South Heaven cultivators are incompetent insects,” she said coolly. The vine on the huge tree behind her began to glow, and then countless branches shot out, slamming into Meng Hao’s Dharma Idol with a boom. At the same time, Meng Hao’s punch slammed into a huge leaf which blocked his way.

However, before Li Ling’er’s expression could even change, Meng Hao snorted and then lifted up his left hand, within which appeared the Lightning Cauldron. As electricity danced, a scornful smile appeared on Li Ling’er’s face.

“You can’t get away!” she said. As the words left her mouth, countless branches sprouted up around Sun Hai, completely locking him in place.

“I wasn’t planning to run!” he said, almost simultaneously. Electricity flashed, and Meng Hao and Li Ling’er switched places!

Meng Hao really hadn’t planned to flee, but instead, switched locations with Li Ling’er instead of Sun Hai!

Li Ling’er was shocked, and before she could react, a rumbling echoed out as, in the blink of an eye, she and Meng Hao switched places seven or

eight more times.

The rapid frequency of the transpositioning was something Li Ling'er couldn't deal with. One time was fine, and two could be dealt with. But after the third time, being shuttled back and forth left her feeling as if she would be ripped apart.

Thankfully, Meng Hao had an incredibly tough fleshly body, otherwise, he wouldn't be able to handle it either.

What caused Li Ling'er's face to fall more than anything else was how Meng Hao was able to launch attacks even in the middle of switching back and forth. He was able to use his divine abilities exactly as he normally could, but often Li Ling'ers attacks would be interrupted.

BOOOMMM!!

In the blink of an eye, a brilliant light began to shine out from Li Ling'er. A vine flew out, which transformed into a flood dragon that shot between her and Meng Hao, tearing a rift into the air itself, pushing them completely apart.

Li Ling'er shot back rapidly, blood spurting out of her mouth. She looked up to glare at Meng Hao, shocked at the incredible power of his fleshly body.

"Despicable!" she said. However, electricity crackled around Meng Hao even as the words left her mouth, causing her face to fall.

However, Meng Hao did not switch positions; he was merely using the dancing lightning to startle her. He punched out again, followed by his Dharma Idol. At the same time, his second true self appeared, and was just about to assist in suppressing Li Ling'er when, shockingly, a Dharma Clone of Li Ling'er stepped out of thin air!

The Dharma Clone immediately began to battle with Meng Hao's second true self.

Booms filled the air, and Meng Hao roared as he turned into a roc, which flew forward as fast as lightning. Li Ling'er had already been injured, and now she was being forced back bit by bit. Meng Hao was incredibly

ferocious, and his attacks provoked peals thunder and flashes of lightning. There was an aura of invincibility surrounding him that caused Li Ling'er to feel suppressed.

In a short period of time, the space of only a few breaths, they fought back and forth viciously. The Blood Demon Grand Magic reappeared. In response, Li Ling'er clasped her hands together above her, causing her entire body to glow with brilliant emerald-green light that transformed into the shape of a magical bottle which fought back against the Blood Demon Grand Magic.

Meng Hao transformed from a roc to the form of a Blood Demon head, slammed into the magical bottle, causing it to explode. At the same time, Li Ling'er waved her right hand, causing the image of a vine to materialize, which then slapped into Meng Hao.

The Blood Demon head shattered, causing blood to ooze from Meng Hao's mouth. However, he didn't retreat in the least. Instead, he charged forward, his fleshly body bursting with intense power. He waved a hand, causing countless enormous mountains to appear one after another. They became a mountain range that forced Li Ling'er to retreat, her heart filled with shock. From what she could tell, Meng Hao was actually more powerful now than he had been when fighting Fan Dong'er.

In fact, he seemed to be building up his energy!

"He could actually become invincible," she thought. "I can't let him finish building up that energy. Otherwise... this battle will end with my defeat!" Eyes flickering, she backed up, performing a double handed incantation, her expression unprecedently solemn.

"World Tree, detonate. Rebuke the Heavens with your spirit. Transform for me! Stifle all the Earth!" As she spoke, she shoved both of her hands out in front of her. A sound could be heard that seemed explosive, and yet at the same time, stifled, like the thump of a heartbeat.

Meng Hao's face flickered. A second sound rang out, then a third, and a fourth. It was at that point, that the huge tree behind Li Ling'er collapsed into pieces, as if it had just passed through countless years of time. The

pieces transformed into a three-hundred-meter log that then passed through Li Ling'er to shoot toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao immediately sensed critical danger as the log neared him, as if it were filled with death itself. In that critical moment, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a rock.

It was a golden-colored rock that looked like a sun, which he shoved out toward the incoming log, filling it with all the power of his cultivation base. Even his Dharma Idol faded as he called upon all the power he could muster. A brilliant light exploded out, illuminating everything in the entire area in a way that everyone in the entire mountain range could see.

Something that looked like a burning sun slammed into the log, causing the ground to quake and the heavenly bodies up above to tremble. The log melted, and the stone's light faded away. Blood oozed out of Meng Hao's mouth, and Li Ling'er convulsed violently. Blood sprayed from her mouth, and she retreated backward with an expression of complete disbelief on her face.

"Trying to run away?" said Meng Hao, eyes flickering with killing intent. "My mom has no maidservant and you'll do just fine!" With that he extended his hand and pointed toward Li Ling'er.

The Eighth Demon Sealing Hex immediately surged out.

In that instant, Li Ling'er's face fell. All of a sudden, it was as if she had no cultivation base. Although it only lasted for a moment, in the middle of magical battle, a moment could change everything.

She stopped in midair, and Meng Hao appeared next to her. He was just about to reach out and grab her when a vicious expression appeared on her face. The air behind her flickered as she prepared to once again utilize the same magic she had used moments before.

However, there was no way Meng Hao would allow that. The Lightning Cauldron appeared, and they once again switched places. Then, again and again, until they had switched places dozens of times!

Even Meng Hao was having difficulty enduring, and his skin began to

split and tear. Li Ling'er was even worse off; she coughed up blood as she sustained serious internal injuries.

Gritting her teeth, she crushed a jade slip, causing ripples to spread out into the air. Clearly, she was just on the verge of teleporting away. Meng Hao snorted, then lifted his right hand and employed the Star Plucking Magic... to suddenly viciously grab Li Ling'er's firm rear end and drag her back toward him.

Li Ling'er trembled, and her entire body went numb. Goosebumps spread out over her skin as she was pulled back to Meng Hao. He sealed her cultivation base, and then everything went dark as she was shoved into his bag of holding.

# Chapter 822: From Now On, Call Me Lil' Hai!

Off to the side, Sun Hai's eyes were wide with astonishment as he watched Meng Hao tuck Li Ling'er into his bag of holding. The attacks he had seen just now left his scalp tingling.

"This guy's just one of those aboriginal local cultivators, how... how could he be so powerful!?!?"

Meanwhile, a roar of rage drifted out from some distance off. The voice belonged to Fan Dong'er, who was followed by a large group of people.

Meng Hao's body flickered as he once again put Sun Hai into his bag of holding. His second true self turned into his shadow as he then sped off into the distance.

The burning lamp floating above his head let off a weak light as Meng Hao proceeded forward. He wiped the blood off of his mouth and then produced some medicinal pills to consume. His eyes shone with a brilliant gleam as a beam of sword qi flew down from a nearby mountain peak, where a single silhouette could be seen.

It was Zhao Yifan, who was separated from Meng Hao by a mountainous valley. The airspace in this area was restricted, so he was incapable of flying directly over. However, his sword qi could slice through the air, and its incredible energy caused huge ripples to spread out in all directions as it descended on Meng Hao. Everyone to whom it was visible found it completely shocking.

Meng Hao looked up at the incoming sword qi, and couldn't help but recall the nine sword forms taught to him by his father. Although the incoming sword was nothing compared to his father's, he could see some clues regarding the Dao of the sword within it.

His eyes shone with a strange gleam as he took a deep breath, then extended his left leg. His body bent like a bow, and in his mind, he could visualize the breathing technique his father had passed down to him. In

that instant, multilayered ripples spread out, and the ground seemed to shrink. Meng Hao himself suddenly seemed to grow rapidly.

As he breathed, it seemed as if all the energy in the entire area were being sucked into him. Popping sounds could be heard as, although his hand did not hold a sword, shockingly... scattered bits of sword qi appeared!

Meng Hao felt like his body was about to explode. He knew that the next movement involved moving his right foot forward, and that it must be executed rapidly along with a powerful gust of wind. Unfortunately, he wasn't capable of executing the movement properly. His body was already at its limit, filled with incredible, and in fact too much, power.

He decided not to go into the second movement, and instead, swept his arm up into the sky like an arrow. Immediately, all the hair on his body stood on end and the incredible energy within him, along with all the power of his cultivation base, exploded out.

Rumbling filled the air as the onlookers saw a shocking sword qi on the mountain Meng Hao stood on. Although it was unfocused, it was still able to surge out and meet the incoming sword qi from Zhao Yifan.

Cries of surprise instantly rang out throughout the mountains.

“The Dao of the sword!”

“What?! He's... he's proficient in the Dao of the sword too!?!?”

“The sword!? Only people with benevolent hearts can cultivate that Dao. This guy is shameless to the extreme! How is it possible for him to utilize the Dao of the sword!?”

Rumbling filled the air as the two beams of sword qi slammed into each other. Brilliant, resplendent light flashed in the air, brightening the entire area.

On the mountain opposite Meng Hao, Zhao Yifan stood there trembling. Although he was not injured, he was excited. His eyes gleamed more than ever with the desire to do battle.

"It's you.... You are the grindstone to polish my sword!!"

Zhixiang was off in the distance, and when she saw what was happening, her delicate mouth went wide with shock. The more she learned about Meng Hao, the more enigmatic he seemed to be. In fact, he almost seemed to be completely different than the Meng Hao she remembered.

"How could he... have changed so much!?" she thought, gasping. It was at this point that Fan Dong'er's enraged voice could be heard echoing off in the distance.

"Meng Hao, I'm gonna kill you!" she screamed, seemingly on the verge of going mad. The female corpse floated behind her like a shadow. During the day it wasn't so bad. It was frightening, but at least it didn't make any noises....

However, at nighttime.... The corpse's hair would fly about, and its eyes would shine with a strange light. It would begin to weep with choked, horrifying sobs that penetrated deep into Fan Dong'er's soul. When she sat down and meditated, the weeping would wrench her out of her trance.

The Mount Sun Holy Land and the Song Clan especially wanted to kill Meng Hao. However, they were worried because he had taken their Young Lords captive, and they weren't sure whether they were alive or dead. Therefore it was with both great anxiety and deadly intent that they pursued Meng Hao.

The three members of the Fang Clan had spread out in different directions to search. Fang Donghan was somber, and rarely made any moves in public. In fact, many people actually overlooked him. However, were it not for the inhuman Fang Wei, the blazing sun of the Fang Clan would actually be Fang Donghan.

Fang Yunyi saw nothing unusual about Meng Hao's sword qi, and as for Fang Xiangshan, she was completely focused on cultivation and didn't pay much attention to the outside world. If it weren't for the fact that the Patriarch had made the request, she would not have come to this place. Therefore, although she didn't have negative feelings toward Meng Hao,

neither did she have a good impression.

However, Fang Donghan was currently staring at Meng Hao disappearing into the mountains, and his mind was buzzing. He... actually recognized that sword move! It was a mysterious Daoist magic recorded in the ancient records of the Fang Clan. The Heaven Severing Sword!

In all of the Fang clan, the only person who had mastered the Heaven Severing Sword and forged his own Dao, was Fang Xiufeng!

“Meng Hao.... That kid from all those years ago would actually be my older cousin.... He was the oldest grandson of my generation.... His name was Fang Hao!

“Fang Hao. Meng Hao....” Fang Donghan took a deep breath, and his eyes glittered brightly.

By the time everyone rushed over to the mountain where Meng Hao had just been seen, he was long gone and nowhere to be found.

However, it didn’t take long for the members of the Li Clan to discover that their Holy Daughter Li Ling’er... was missing.

Soon, people from the Church of the Immortal Emperor realized that their Chosen had also vanished....

After double-checking, they came to the conclusion that Li Ling’er and Sun Hai had in fact disappeared. Obviously... the person responsible for this was most likely Meng Hao!

“Heavens! Taiyang Zi, Song Luodan, Li Ling’er, and Sun Hai were all captured by Meng Hao!”

“Don’t forget Fan Dong’er. Although she wasn’t taken captive, she’s actually in a much more bitter position than if she had.”

“This Meng Hao... wishes to defy the Heavens!”

Few words were spoken for the rest of the night. There were many people searching for Meng Hao, but the mountain range was simply too vast. The various sects and clans even used some secret powers at their disposal, but because they couldn’t utilize flight, they were unable to find

Meng Hao, at least temporarily.

Mysteriously, the restriction on the airspace actually did not decrease when the ancient temple disappeared, and actually, grew more intense, and covered an even wider area.

Soon it was dawn. Meng Hao stood beneath an ancient tree, his eyes gleaming brightly. After resting for a few hours, his energy was completely restored, and he was just about to continue onward when suddenly he decided to slap his bag of holding and take out Li Ling'er and Sun Hai.

Their cultivation bases were sealed, so all Li Ling'er could do was glare at Meng Hao. Her hair was a mess, and she was grinding her teeth; as of this moment, there was no aloof pride to her whatsoever.

Sun Hai was shivering, and when he saw that Meng Hao was about to grab him by the hair, he immediately wailed, "I'll write the promissory note!"

He did not dare to oppose Meng Hao any further. His clothing had long since been torn to shreds, and his flesh had become a mass of scrapes and wounds. After that, he had witnessed Meng Hao's fight with Li Ling'er, and he immediately decided to yield.

"Why didn't you say so earlier!?" said Meng Hao, smiling happily. He immediately produced a paper and pen and handed it to Sun Hai, who sighed and then began to write down a huge sum. He looked sullenly at Meng Hao, and then inwardly swore that if he survived this ordeal, he would never forget Meng Hao's face for the rest of his life.

Having taken care of Sun Hai, Meng Hao next turned to look at Li Ling'er. She stared back at him furiously, causing him to clear his throat.

"Don't look at me that way," he said. "I really am married already, and my wife is way prettier than you." With that, he took a look into Li Ling'er's bag of holding, and instantly, his eyes began to shine brightly.

"You Chosen... are... really stinking rich!!" He took a deep breath as he glanced over the vast quantities of spirit stones in the bag of holding. There were also rare medicinal pills and a jade box.

Inside the jade box was a deep-gold shortsword, upon which was affixed a magical talisman.

The pressure it exuded was comparable to the sunstone he had acquired earlier. It was definitely a very precious item!

The sword was something that required advanced preparation to wield; Meng Hao's incredible power had put her in such a bad position during their battle that she'd never had time to focus on using it.

"I really hate to say it, but I'm going to need to take this sword," he said, clearing his throat. Flames seemed to be on the verge of bursting out of Li Ling'er's eyes. Meng Hao put her bag of holding away, then reached out and put his hand into her robe, and after searching for a while came out with a jade slip and a few other miscellaneous objects.

Off to the side, Sun Hai looked on wide-eyed, feeling a bit envious of Meng Hao.

Li Ling'er's face went bright red, and her murderous intent and rage burned even harder. Even as Meng Hao took away all her miscellaneous items, her body suddenly flashed. Shockingly, she still had a bit of cultivation base accessible. She leaned to the side and then reached out toward the bronze lamp. She moved with lightning speed, having waited patiently for this one moment to make her move. As her hand closed in on the lamp, the flame dimmed, as if it were about to be extinguished.

"What a patient little wench," Meng Hao said coolly. He then lifted his right hand up and spanked her rear end.

A slapping sound rang out, and Li Ling'er let out a miserable squeal. Her entire body went numb, and she crumpled to the ground in pain, completely incapable of reaching out to touch the ancient bronze lamp. Her face went pale, and cold sweat began to drop down her forehead. Meng Hao had struck her... far too viciously. In fact, from Sun Hai's vantage point, it was obvious that... Li Ling'er's buttocks were now uneven....

"You've been bad," Meng Hao said somberly. He lifted his right hand up into the air again, and as Sun Hai looked on in shock....

SMACK!

Sun Hai's mind was now completely blank as he realized that Li Ling'er's rear end... was now even once again.

Li Ling'er was in such pain that tears rolled down her face, and she couldn't see clearly. Somehow, that made her look even more beautiful than before in a way that could cause people to fall in love with her. Meng Hao looked like he was smiling, but actually, his eyes were completely calm. After everything he had experienced in his life, he wasn't the type of person to be moved easily by those kinds of things.

After thoroughly sealing Li Ling'er, he put her back into his bag of holding and then looked at Sun Hai.

"Let's see, you're Fellow Daoist Sun, right?"

Sun Hai began to shiver when he realized Meng Hao was staring at him. His heart trembled, and he put a very fawning expression onto his face.

"Elder Brother Meng, I still haven't introduced myself. In the future, you can just call me Lil' Hai...."

"Elder Brother Meng, you know, as soon as we all caught sight of you for the first time outside the temple, I could tell that you were a dragon amongst men, a Dao child amongst Chosen, a prodigy amongst Dao Children! Your eyes are like two seas of stars, and from the moment I saw you, my esteem for you was burned deep into the recesses of my soul!"

"In fact, I, Lil' Hai, could not be more grateful for the painstaking instruction you have provided me with these past few days. That gratitude is etched upon my very heart, filling its every nook and cranny. Every bit of my soul is filled with respect for you, sir!"

Meng Hao gaped at him.

"Please," Sun Hai repeated somberly, "from now on, call me Lil' Hai!"

# Chapter 823: Ambush!

Although Meng Hao had experienced a lifetime of volatile situations, to see Sun Hai from the Church of the Immortal Emperor so quickly change his tone, to put on such a flattering air and to speak such fawning words, caused him to first gape and then sigh emotionally. He suddenly missed the shameful and degenerate meat jelly and parrot.

After Sun Hai finished talking, Meng Hao cleared his throat. Although he was actually inwardly pleased, he glared solemnly at Sun Hai and said, “Well aren’t we glib!? Do you really think I’m the type of person who likes to be flattered!?”

Sun Hai’s heart began to pound, and he muttered to himself that things were not looking good. In his entire life, he had only met a few people with personalities as strong as this, and he knew that they were the most difficult of all to deal with. He hesitated for a moment, and then Meng Hao suddenly sighed.

“However,” Meng Hao said, “considering that everything you said is completely true, I’ll forgive you just this once.” With that, he grabbed Sun Hai by the hair and made to toss him back into his bag of holding.

Sun Hai was inwardly outraged. It seemed to him that his hair was on the verge of falling out completely. However, he didn’t dare to struggle, and actually put on a thankful expression.

Inside, he was cursing with grief and indignation.

After putting Sun Hai away, Meng Hao coughed lightly.

“Gratitude etched upon the very heart, filling its every nook and cranny. Every bit of the soul filled with respect. Well said.” Meng Hao looked up into the sky, then flickered into a blur as he headed deeper into the mountains. His expression was the same, but his eyes gleamed coldly as he proceeded along, completely soundless.

“Considering the level of dad’s cultivation base, he could have prevented these people from even coming here. This is a trial by fire for me....

Therefore, it won't exceed the limits of what I can handle.

"All those old bastards are actually Immortals. Their cultivation bases definitely exceed the Spirit Realm, but they've obviously sealed themselves...." Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he considered the speculations he could put together with the clues he had.

"They don't dare to unseal themselves... otherwise they would face a complete catastrophe!"

One by one, several days passed.

Meng Hao would alternate between resting and traveling. When he would encounter pursuers every so often, he would often flee after a bit of fighting. Sometimes he would intentionally show up in order to baffle them and throw off their predictions of where he would be.

More days passed. Eventually, all of the injuries he had sustained during his battle with Li Ling'er were healed. The bronze lamp floating above his head continued to burn. By this point, he was able to vaguely sense traces of Immortal might swirling around inside of it!

That got him very excited, and fueled his determination to endure for the entire 49 days.

"The end is in sight!" he thought. Taking a deep breath, he once again sped off into the distance.

Three more days passed. It was evening, and Meng Hao was moving along as usual, when suddenly, he stopped in place, then dashed backward. A ghostly figure was closing in on him, seemingly heading directly toward his forehead.

At the same time, a person approached from off in the distance. Every step he took caused the ground to quake, as if he weren't a person, but rather, some ancient wild beast.

He had no hair, and was incredibly well-built. His body emanated incredible pressure, and his eyes seemed to be filled with glittering stars. Blinding, brilliant light swirled around him.

These were signs that his fleshly body had been cultivated to the peak. This person... was Fang Yunyi from the Fang Clan!

“Sure enough, I find you here,” he said with a proud smile.

“Sure enough?” replied Meng Hao, his eyes glittering like swords. The words “sure enough” carried a lot of meaning, and this Fang Yunyi was not unfamiliar to Meng Hao. He was one of the three members of the Fang Clan that Meng Hao had taken special notice of back outside the temple.

Meng Hao had complicated feelings regarding the Fang Clan.

“I don’t care about your good fortune. What I’m interested in is you yourself!” As he spoke, he rushed forward like the wind, rapidly closing the gap between him and Meng Hao.

“Join my entourage... or die!” As he spoke, the heavenly bodies in his eyes grew more apparent, and his energy surged up to the pinnacle.

The last word he spoke echoed out like thunder in all directions, causing everything to ripple. Amorphous rifts were torn into the air, and in the blink of an eye, Meng Hao turned into a tiny rowboat in a raging sea. The intense pressure weighing down seemed as if it would crush him at any moment.

“Screw off!” said Meng Hao, looking coldly at Fang Yunyi. His simple words rang out as shocking as massive peals of thunder, creating a sound wave that shattered the pressure formed by Fang Yunyi’s invisible energy

“Looking to die?!” Fang Yunyi said with a cold laugh. He took a step forward, clenched his right hand into a fist, and then punched out with the energy of a fleshly body that exceeded peak Dao Seeking. Massive power exploded out. Furthermore, a huge, illusory Dharma Idol appeared behind him. It was blurry, making it difficult to clearly make out what exactly it was, but it was clearly humanoid.

Meng Hao’s eyes grew colder, and he said nothing further. He strode forward, and the power of his own fleshly body exploded out as he punched out with his right fist, meeting Fang Yunyi’s attack directly.

A rumbling boom echoed out as Meng Hao transformed into a roc. The

Mountain Consuming Incantation became numerous mountains that linked together into a mountain range that swept across the area. Fang Yunyi's face flickered, and in the blink of an eye, nearly a hundred exchanges had occurred.

Booms rang out, and the air was ripped to pieces. Finally, they both separated. Fang Yunyi's face was pale, and he was unable to prevent the blood from oozing out of the corners of this mouth.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he prepared to leave.

"Stop annoying me!" he said.

Fang Yunyi's eyes were bloodshot, and blue veins bulged on his neck and face.

"Heaven Sundering!" he suddenly roared. Rumbling filled the air as the blurry image of the Dharma Idol behind him suddenly became clear. Shockingly, it was a two-headed giant!

The giant emanated an archaic aura, as if the Dharma Idol itself had originated in ancient times, and had traveled through time to appear here. The two heads tilted back and a shocking, soundless roar filled the air. At the same time, Fang Yunyi's energy shifted and became completely different than before.

It now possessed a shocking savagery!

He roared again as he shot forward, aiming another punch directly at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's pupils constricted from the sense of grave crisis he felt from Fang Yunyi. His expression was solemn as his own Dharma Idol appeared, an equally shocking giant whose appearance caused everything to tremble. Meng Hao clenched his hand into a fist as he moved to intercept Fang Yunyi.

Even as the two of them closed in on each other, the sound of wailing filled the air as a figure appeared, shooting like lightning toward Meng Hao.

In addition to the wails of grief, the figure howled shrilly, "Meng Hao!!"

The voice was filled with boundless hatred, and its owner was a woman. It was none other than Fan Dong'er, and the wailing did not come from her, but rather... Inky, who was only a few inches behind her.

At the same time, two more figures neared. They were older cultivators, one from Mount Sun and the other from the Li Clan. From the method of their arrival, it seemed as if they knew Meng Hao would appear here.

Rumble!

As the three newcomers neared, Fang Yunyi's mouth twisted into a derisive smile. Although he looked crude and impetuous, he was actually very capable of crafty scheming. His right fist opened up into a palm that moved to grab hold of Meng Hao's fist. He was convinced that all he had to do was delay Meng Hao for a few breaths of time, and he would be defeated.

At this critical juncture, Meng Hao's eyes flickered. His right index finger pointed out as the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex was unleashed. Demonic qi swept about, and Fang Yunyi trembled. His face fell as he realized he was suddenly completely locked in place.

Next, Meng Hao touched the tips of his five fingers together to form the shape of a mountain. A vicious expression could be seen on his face as his hand stabbed directly into Fang Yunyi's palm.

At the same time, his Dharma Idol roared as it slammed into Fang Yunyi's Dharma Idol up in midair.

Rumbling filled the air as mountains crumbled. Blood sprayed out of Fang Yunyi's mouth. Shock filled his face, but before he could retreat, Meng Hao turned into a roc that slammed into his chest. A cracking sound could be heard, and Fang Yunyi's face fell. It felt like a star was slamming into him. Even as his breastbone shattered, Meng Hao unleashed the Blood Demon Grand Magic, which began to suck away at Fang Yunyi. At the same time, his second true self emerged and shot toward Fan Dong'er.

Meng Hao was now borrowing the strength of Fang Yunyi's fleshly body

to replenish himself. At the same time, he endured the powerful incoming attacks from the two old cultivators.

A shocking boom could be heard, and Meng Hao coughed up a mouthful of blood. Fang Yunyi let out a miserable shriek as his body withered up. He was just on the verge of passing into death when Meng Hao tossed him into his bag of holding and then began to speed off into the distance.

The Lightning Cauldron appeared, crackling with electricity. He was just on the verge of using its powers when suddenly, a beam of starlight appeared. The electricity was snuffed out, and Meng Hao's Form Displacement Transposition failed!

Shockingly, Fan Dong'er held a chunk of starstone in her hand, which radiated glittering starlight.

It was in that moment that a shocking beam of sword qi shot down from up ahead, heading directly toward Meng Hao. That was none other than Zhao Yifan.

"So, somebody figured out that I would pass by this way, and... they set up an ambush!" Were Meng Hao unable to put the pieces of this puzzle together, he would never have been able to rise to prominence in the lands of South Heaven.

The flame in the bronze lamp above his head was still burning, but was much weaker than before. It looked like it might wink out at any moment. Furthermore, Meng Hao was in a very difficult position. Not only was everyone attacking him all at once, but at this time he was also the more seriously injured than he had been this entire time.

There was sword qi blocking his path forward, which came from Zhao Yifan, who stood there looking like a sword Immortal. Behind him was Fan Dong'er, who was tangling with his second true self. Her eyes radiated killing intent, and the sea of stars surrounding her surged toward Meng Hao to smash him.

On the left and right respectively were the two old cultivators. Their faces were cold and grim, and their sealed cultivation bases gave them power similar to false immortals.

Meng Hao was surrounded on all sides, and was the target of a deadly attack that would surely kill him!

Starlight filled the area, restricting the airspace completely and sealing his surroundings.

At the same time, Ji Yin from the Ji Clan sat cross-legged on a nearby mountaintop, surrounded by boundless, swirling Karma that made it difficult to make out his appearance.

However, his eyes obviously glowed with merciless coldness, piercing out through the layers of Karma to look... at the bronze oil lamp hanging over Meng Hao's head.

"That lamp... does not exist within Karma," he murmured. An unprecedented burning fervor gradually appeared within the coldness of his eyes.

"The main reason I came to the lands of South Heaven was because I could sense through Karma that there was an object here clearly connected to me by destiny!

"This Meng Hao is extraordinary, but that destiny... belongs to me!"

# Chapter 824: Wrecking the Ambush

It was a deadly ambush. Meng Hao didn't even have the time to try and take Li Ling'er and the others out of his bag of holding to use as hostages. Power bore down on him from all sides, and in any case, Fan Dong'er and Zhao Yifan wouldn't withhold from attacking him because of hostages.

In the time it takes a spark to fly up from a piece of flint, a threatening, cold gleam appeared in Meng Hao's eyes, and he stopped in place. He took a deep breath and then extended his right hand, within which was the sunstone he had acquired. Boundless blinding heat waves instantly exploded out in all directions.

Rumbling could be heard, and everything distorted as ripples spread out. The two old Dao Protectors stopped in their tracks, and Zhao Yifan's eyes exuded a penetrating glow. In the blink of an eye, he transformed into the shape of a greatsword that slashed down toward Meng Hao.

At the same time, starlight from Fan Dong'er's starstone shot out to resist Meng Hao's sunstone.

A mere sunstone was in no way capable of doing anything to stop the combined attack of four experts. All it could do was make them pause for a moment. However, Meng Hao used that moment of time to spin around and transform into a prismatic beam of light that shot toward Fan Dong'er.

He moved with incredible speed, and as he closed in, his Dharma Idol appeared and attacked. In the blink of an eye, he exchanged several moves with Fan Dong'er. Meng Hao was shaken, and blood even spilled out of his mouth, but he did not back up. A vicious gleam appeared in his eyes, and he suddenly swung his leg in a kick that screamed through the air like a cyclone. A series of booms echoed out, and Fan Dong'er's face fell. Meng Hao felt completely different to her than he had before; now he attacked relentlessly, consumed with boundless, bloody fiendishness.

Fan Dong'er performed a double-handed incantation, and an enormous conch shell appeared behind her. As the susurrating droning sound of the

conch filled the air, Meng Hao produced his beast claw. The image of a black cat materialized, and a piercing screech filled the air as it slashed toward Fan Dong'er.

A snapping sound could be heard as the image of the black cat was destroyed. However, the conch also trembled and then exploded. Fan Dong'er gave a cold snort, performed another double handed incantation gesture, and pushed forward. The shattered pieces of the conch then swirled together into a cyclone that shot toward Meng Hao.

Fan Dong'er herself backed up rapidly, then faced off against Meng Hao's second true self.

Meng Hao's expression became even more vicious. Behind him was Zhao Yifan's monstrous sword Qi. The two old Dao Protector's killing intent was even more intense than before as they sped toward him. The ripples of power from Meng Hao's sunstone were now incapable of restraining them in any way.

Meng Hao shouted as he relied on the strength of his extraordinary fleshly body to slam head first into the incoming cyclone of conch shell fragments. He became a golden roc that moved with lightning-like speed as he smashed through the cyclone. He came out the other side slashed and bleeding, and before Zhao Yifan or the two Dao Protectors could get near, was speeding in pursuit of Fan Dong'er!

Fan Dong'er's face fell. She had never imagined that Meng Hao could be so vicious. In their previous encounter, she had taken him to be shameless, and nothing more. But in this fight, she could sense an unprecedented level of savagery on his person.

Such savagery wasn't something most people could possess. It was something earned from events that ordinary people couldn't experience, and that gave rise to incredible power.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered with killing intent. The golden roc's wings spread as it swept toward Fan Dong'er. Rumbling filled the air as she hastily made a counterattack. A boom rattled out, and blood sprayed from Fan Dong'er's mouth. She instantly fell into retreat, her eyes filled with

hatred as she crushed the starstone she held in her hand!

The stone shattered, causing boundless starlight to spread out and envelop Meng Hao. In the blink of an eye, Meng Hao was rendered motionless.

Because of that pause, the incoming sword qi from Zhao Yifan... slashed down onto Meng Hao.

He trembled as the attack slashed a huge bloody gash down his back, revealing the bones within. Were it not for his powerful fleshly body, and the ripples of the sunstone causing everything in the area to be weakened, that sword would have completely cut Meng Hao in half!

Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao's mouth. In the same moment in which he was slashed by the sword, the two old Dao Protectors closed in from either side. Divine abilities and magical techniques slammed directly into Meng Hao.

A huge boom filled the air, and more blood sprayed out of Meng Hao's mouth. Thankfully, he was well prepared; a mountain range materialized around him, along with the Black White Pearls. The sunstone was weakened, but Meng Hao was not dead. However, he was sent spinning like a kite with its string cut. He flew through the air and then slammed into the ground some distance off. He struggled to his feet, coughing up more blood.

"DIE!" cried Fan Dong'er, flickering as she charged toward him. A divine sea appeared around her, within which were countless roaring sea dragons that sped toward Meng Hao.

Zhao Yifan's expression was calm, albeit slightly disappointed. As for the two old Dao Protectors, they approached Meng Hao with cold smiles, clearly intent on cutting him down.

Meng Hao's vision was swimming, and the bronze lamp over his head was dim, and seemed to be on the verge of being extinguished. When he saw that, Meng Hao suddenly smiled coldly.

"Second true self.... Devilish will, return!" When his words rang out, the

sky and the land began to rumble. The air twisted as his second true self closed his eyes. Immediately, black mist began to pour out of his nose, ears and mouth.

Shockingly, it transformed into an enormous head which radiated an indescribable murderous desire as it shot forward. This was Meng Hao's Devil Construct, formed from the murderous desire that had led him to kill countless enemies.

Back when he stepped into Dao Seeking, he had severed it, then fused it into his second true self, having believed that he would never need it again. The Devilish will could make him even more powerful, although the consequences would be immense!

It was even possible that it might influence him on a psychological level. In this critical moment, though, it was without hesitation that he took a deep breath, causing the boundless black mist to shoot toward him.

It moved with incredible speed, merging into him in the blink of an eye. Instantly, black veins appeared all over his skin. At the same time, an unprecedented murderous aura exploded out from him.

This was the aura of a Devil!

This was an aura of murder!

This was Meng Hao's previous pinnacle!

Countless evil spirits suddenly surrounded Meng Hao, ferocious and savage as they emitted soundless howls. These were the ghosts of all the people Meng Hao had slaughtered.

The entire area suddenly became incredibly cold, and filled with fluttering black snowflakes.

Meng Hao's hair whipped around him as his energy rocketed up. A cold mercilessness appeared in his eyes, and he suddenly gave off the feeling that he was a god of death!

Fan Dong'er started trembling, and her eyes went wide with disbelief.

"Who is this guy?" she thought. "For such a murderous aura to appear

all of a sudden, means... just how many people has he killed? Only a powerful expert who has climbed mountains of corpses and swam through seas of blood could have a Devilish, murderous aura like that!"

Zhao Yifan's eyes once again began to shine brightly.

The two old Dao Protectors stared in shock, but it was without hesitation that they charged toward Meng Hao, their killing intent even stronger than before.

As they closed in, Meng Hao suddenly looked up. Then, he started laughing. A Blood Demon Grand Magic vortex appeared, causing the vegetation and trees in the area to wither. Even the ground began to crack and split.

Meng Hao's energy was still soaring upward, and as his four enemies closed in on him, he rose to his feet and took a step forward. He extended his right hand and used the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex at full power.

RUMBLE!

The Eighth Hex coalesced all of the murderous aura and Devilish will inside of him. Explosive power caused everything to shake as invisible Demonic qi caused the four other cultivators to instantly stop in place.

Meng Hao took another step, and was then standing in front of Fan Dong'er. He raised his right hand and punched Fan Dong'er in the stomach, causing blood to spray from her mouth. Cracking sounds could be heard as three separate jade slips on her person were shattered, as if they took her place in passing away into death.

Meng Hao's face was cold and merciless as his right hand suddenly snaked out to latch onto Fan Dong'er's arm. He violently wrenched down, and a ripping sound could be heard as Fan Dong'er, her eyes filled with determination, allowed her arm to be ripped off as she herself shot backward at top speed. Meng Hao looked at her coldly, but didn't pursue. Instead, his body flickered, and he appeared in front of Zhao Yifan. Another punch was sent out, and Zhao Yifan was sent tumbling backward, blood spraying from his mouth.

At that moment, Meng Hao raised his hand, holding the sunstone aloft.

“Shatter!” he said, his voice raspy. The sunstone shuddered and then exploded, causing a wave of intense heat to billow out in all directions, instantly enveloping Zhao Yifan.

Zhao Yifan’s entire body burst into flames, and he let out a muffled grunt, then sped backward at top speed, blood spraying from his mouth.

At the same time, Meng Hao delivered a third punch. This punch landed on Li Ling’er’s Dao Protector. Backed by the full power of the Devilish will, his blow caused the old man to cough up blood. He instantly sagged weakly, his expression one of astonishment.

As of this moment, it appeared as if Meng Hao had borrowed the power of the Devil Construct to temporarily break past the peak power of the Spirit Realm.

He did not land a fourth blow, as his vision had begun to swim. He could recall his Devilish will, but if too much time passed, the effects would be irreversible. It was at this moment that, all of a sudden, a figure appeared off in the distance.

“Stay away!!” cried Fan Dong’er, her facial expression flickering. The most important aspect of their ambush had been to restrict Meng Hao’s ability to use his Lightning Cauldron. In addition to using the starstone to suppress it, it was also important that there be nobody in the area that he could switch places with.

This was something that everyone understood, and also why only four people were attacking him, while everyone else waited off in the distance, out of Meng Hao’s field of view.

As soon as the approaching figure heard Fan Dong’er’s words, it sped backward at top speed. However, Meng Hao’s eyes flickered as he looked at the figure off in the distance; suddenly, the Lightning Cauldron appeared in his hand. Electricity danced, and Meng Hao used Form Displacement Transposition on the distant figure.

The instant they switched places, Meng Hao heard a voice speaking in

his ear.

"Elder Brother Meng, Ji Yin is the one who figured out that you would pass by here."

Meng Hao ignored the voice, almost as if he hadn't even heard the words being spoken. His eyes were dark, and he almost didn't seem to be conscious. However, an almost undetectable flicker could be seen in his eyes when he realized that the person he had switched locations with was none other than Fang Donghan!

After switching places with him, Meng Hao was free of the ambush. Electricity danced around him as he looked toward the crowds of shocked people off in the distance.

He quickly found another target to switch places with. As long as he could see someone, he could switch places, and would not find himself locked down in an ambush like he had been.

Because of the repeated use of Form Displacement Transposition, his body was on the verge of collapse, and his Eternal stratum was hard at work. However, because it was still recovering from its earlier depletion, it was unable to provide its previous high-speed regeneration until it had fully been restored. And that, would require time.

# Chapter 825: Zhixiang Pays Her Debt!

Unfortunately, time was a luxury that Meng Hao did not have!

He was surrounded by Chosen and Dao Protectors from the various clans and sects of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Virtually all were present, and even though he could use Form Displacement Transposition, he still had his limits.

Furthermore, the Chosen and Dao Protectors had now recovered from being stunned at Meng Hao's escape from their ambush and were once again racing to catch up to him.

Meng Hao's face was pale as he sped along, pursued by Wang Mu and some other Chosen. Gradually, more and more figures began to gather in pursuit around him. Although Meng Hao couldn't actually see any of them, he could sense them, and knew that there were many.

The one-armed Fan Dong'er was clearly visible behind him giving chase, although Zhao Yifan was nowhere to be seen.

Meng Hao could also see the Fang clan's Fang Xiangshan in the crowd.

From the look of things, a grand battle was about to break out. However, it was at this point that a huge boom rang out. The ground beneath Meng Hao's feet quaked, and massive fissures spread out as a mountain peak up ahead of Meng Hao collapsed into pieces.

As it exploded, a huge beam of majestic light shot out from the ruins of the mountain. It appeared to be some sort of precious treasure manifesting itself, and it immediately attracted the attention of all of Meng Hao's pursuers.

At the same time, the ground seemed to be on the verge of collapsing. A huge depression appeared as an enormous yellow loach suddenly exploded out of the ground that was nearly a thousand meters long. Actually, it was not one, but a total of nine that appeared.

In an instant, the situation on the battlefield had completely changed.

"A Demon Loach!"

“How could there be a Demon Loach in this place!?!?”

“Dammit! Aren’t Demon Loaches native to Planet North Reed!?”

The entire area was thrown into an uproar as the nine Demon Loaches roared onto the scene. The ground quaked, and all of a sudden, an urgent voice transmitted into Meng Hao’s mind.

“Meng Hao, head toward the third Demon Loach!”

Because of the voice, Meng Hao awoke somewhat from his previously hazy mental state. He looked over at the third Demon Loach, and then instantly began to speed toward it. As he neared it, the enormous Demon Loach opened its mouth and swallowed him up, then dove back down toward the ground.

People on ground-level in the area began to call out, and several attempted to block the diving loach. However, it was at this point that the rest of the Demon Loaches spontaneously exploded. Massive booms rattled out over the land. At the same time, the bright light shining from the mountain reached a pinnacle of intensity, covering all the land until no one could see anything except the light.

Eventually, the light got so bright that it turned into blackness!

As for Meng Hao, everything went dark after being swallowed by the Demon Loach. However, he could feel that the creature was moving along at high speed, so he sat down cross-legged and rotated his cultivation base. He quickly began to exorcise the Demonic will, then consumed large quantities of medicinal pills to begin his healing process.

Meng Hao had been quite seriously injured in the battle just now. However, throughout his life, he had been seriously injured on many occasions, so from beginning to end, he was calm inside.

Time passed. A few days later, the Demon Loach finally stopped moving, and instead sank downward into the earth. Meng Hao’s eyes opened, and he saw that there were three people with him inside of the Demon Loach’s tunnel-like body.

The person in the lead position was a woman wearing a veil. It was

impossible to see her features clearly, but her eyes were beautiful, and from that it was possible to tell that the woman herself was stunning.

Standing on either side of her were two old women, both of whom were ancient, with faces covered with wrinkles. They seemed to have seen many years between them, and their eyes were dim. Of course, within that dimness was hidden storm-like violence.

Meng Hao looked at the woman and calmly said, “We haven’t seen each other for years.”

The woman was none other than Zhixiang!

One of the old women standing next to Zhixiang coolly said, “The kindness you showed to the Demon Immortal Sect has been paid back to you by us two this day. Our Demon Loach has already taken you away from the the deadly ambush set for you by Ji Yin.”

The woman glanced at the bronze lamp above Meng Hao’s head, then looked away and said nothing further. She, along with the other Dao Protector, sat down cross-legged.

Zhixiang stepped forward to stand in front of Meng Hao. After looking him over for a moment, she covered her mouth with her hand and laughed.

Despite the fact that her face was covered by a veil, her laughter was sweet and attractive.

“Like I said, the Demon Immortal Sect was deeply in your debt,” she said. She extended her right hand toward Meng Hao, within which was a jade bottle. “This is a medicinal pill, an ancient medicine from the Demon Immortal Sect. It should heal your wounds rapidly.”

Meng Hao didn’t respond, nor was he surprised by any of this. The urgent voice he had heard transmitted into his mind earlier had belonged to her.

He took the jade bottle and opened it up. There was a red medicinal pill inside, which, based on his skill in the Dao of alchemy, he could instantly tell was extraordinary. After a moment of consideration, he picked up the

medicinal pill, examined it closely, then swallowed it.

"You're not afraid?" Zhixiang asked suddenly.

"There is nobody in the lands of South Heaven who can harm me," Meng Hao said calmly.

"Oh? What about that deadly ambush just now?"

"I was tempering myself through training. If there was really a chance that I was going to die, things would have changed." With that, he closed his eyes, which caused the two old women to open their own eyes and look at him.

The pill contained no poison, and as soon as he consumed it, it transformed into a warm current that flowed through his body. The injury on his back immediately healed up, and black mist slowly seeped out of the palm of his right hand.

A few days passed, and by the time Meng Hao opened his eyes again, his hand was filled with a black mist that was the Devil Construct, which was now completely forced out of his body.

Having expelled the Devil Construct, Meng Hao felt his heart pounding in trepidation. The danger he had faced in this incident was not the threat to his life, but rather, the influence of the Devilish will. Although the Devil Construct could give him access to incredible power, he had to pay a steep price for that.

Now that the Devil Construct was taken care of, Meng Hao's injuries were nearly completely recovered.

"Thank you," he said to the two seated old women, and Zhixiang.

Zhixiang looked at the Devil Construct in Meng Hao's hand, thought for a moment, and then looked at Meng Hao.

"Ji Yin sealed your second true self and took him away.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered coldly.

"That's fine," he replied. "I'll just have to go get him back." With that, he rose to his feet, clasped hands, and bowed deeply to Zhixiang and the two

old women. “Many thanks to you.”

“There’s no need to be so polite,” replied Zhixiang. “We were simply repaying you for the favor from that year.” The two old women merely looked deeply at Meng Hao.

Zhixiang smiled. Seeing that Meng Hao wished to depart, she waved her hand, causing a spinning vortex to appear behind him. Within the vortex could be seen the mountain range in the outside world.

“Regardless, I will remember what you have done for me this day,” said Meng Hao. He bowed again, then gave Zhixiang one final look. Zhixiang couldn’t prevent her heart from quivering a bit as she recalled everything that had happened back in the ancient Demon Immortal Sect.

Meng Hao turned and walked toward the portal.

“I heard you got married. Is it true?” asked Zhixiang.

Meng Hao stopped walking.

“It’s true.”

“Congratulations,” Zhixiang said with the same calm smile as ever. “Oh, there’s one other bit of news that I wanted to tell you. It won’t be long now before something big happens in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. The Three Great Daoist Societies will be hosting a disciple recruitment event, which will be supported by the Five Great Holy Lands, and the Three Churches and Six Sects!

“This sort of thing happens every so often, and when the time comes, any cultivator in the Ninth Mountain and Sea who is above the Nascent Soul stage and below the Immortal Realm may participate.

“Some people do it in the hopes of joining a sect. Others do it for the precious treasures that are prepared as rewards for the momentous occasion!”

Meng Hao’s eyes filled with a look of concentration. After a moment of thought, he nodded his head and then walked into the vortex, whereupon he vanished.

Silence reigned inside the Demon Loach. The two old women's eyes flickered as they exchanged a hesitant glance.

"He did me a great favor," said Zhixiang calmly.

The two old women nodded.

"Oh well. He appeared to be injured, but he is obviously as cautious as ever. A Chosen like him would definitely have other tricks up his sleeve."

"Besides, after he woke up, he appeared to be confident in having someone to back him. Now that I think about it, that makes sense, especially considering he was able to get into the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple before everyone else."

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Meng Hao left the Demon Loach via the vortex, emerging beneath an evening sky. A tongue of flame appeared in the bronze lamp above his head, which caused Meng Hao to breathe a sigh of relief.

The lamp was still unextinguished, and if Meng Hao's calculations were correct, there were only four more days left of the 49 day period.

"Four days...." he thought, a cold gleam appearing in his eyes.

"In four days, the good fortune of the bronze lamp will be completed. When that happens, I won't have anything holding me back from making all of these people pay the price for coming here!" He snorted coldly and then disappeared as he flashed off into the distance.

The first thing he did was find a suitable place to act as a hidden Immortal's cave. He sat down cross-legged to meditate and wait for time to pass.

As the days went by, the situation in the outside world reached a frenzy. In the boundless mountain range, numerous Chosen and Dao Protectors had spread out in all directions in their search for Meng Hao.

They had set up sealing spells all over the mountains to ensure that Meng Hao couldn't flee. They literally did everything in their power to find traces of him.

The battle that had resulted from the ambush made it so that none of his pursuers looked down on him any more. In fact, to them, he was now viewed as the cream of the crop when it came to the Chosen.

After all, any other Chosen who ended up trapped in an ambush like he had been, would surely have been killed!

In contrast, Meng Hao had seriously injured Zhao Yifan, severed Fan Dong'er's limb, and severely hurt a Dao Protector. During the process, he himself had been seriously injured, and yet had managed to escape from the ambush.

Although quite a few people could tell that he had received aid in the end, his reputation was still rapidly growing!

One could imagine how, after all these people left Planet South Heaven, they would spread word of Meng Hao's escapades throughout the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

He had suppressed Taiyang Zi, sealed Song Luodan, captured Li Ling'er and crushed Sun Hai and Fang Yunyi.

Because of him, Fan Dong'er was transformed from being a Goddess into a woman haunted by a ghost, and had also lost a limb. Zhao Yifan was seriously injured, and had retreated from battle. He had injured a Dao Protector, and evaded the search of roughly a thousand people for days. All of that... was enough to leave any Chosen completely shaken.

As of this point, Meng Hao's tempering was complete.

And yet... he wasn't satisfied!

"The end is almost here!"

The four day period was over. As the search continued in the outside world, Meng Hao's eyes opened, and were filled with anticipation regarding the bronze lamp.

# Chapter 826: ! [1]

This day was the 49th day Meng Hao had kept the bronze lamp alight!

This day was the last day!

It was currently nighttime, and the moon wasn't visible. The entire mountain range was swathed in pitch black, without the slightest bit of light anywhere.

The only light in the entire land... was in Meng Hao's Immortal cave... from that flickering flame.

The bronze lamp burned with Meng Hao's blood, creating an Immortal flame that had flickered to the very end.

Meng Hao was staring at the bronze lamp, waiting. He had experienced much carnage to reach this point, and now... the moment was here.

"Keep the lamp burning for 49 days," he murmured, "and then, in the moment that it's extinguished, it will form an Immortal meridian inside me!"

"Gain enlightenment about that Immortal meridian, and my path... will be the path of ancient times!" By this point, the Chosen and Dao Protectors of the various sects and clans had sensed that something strange was going on.

A pressure had gradually arisen that weighed down on the entire mountain range. At the same time, the restrictions on the airspace... had suddenly been loosened.

Gradually, a sensation of imminent crisis could be sensed.

Ji Yin stood atop a mountain, looking at the surrounding lands. Karma swirled around him, making it impossible for anyone to see him clearly. However, his eyes shone with intense light.

"Dammit... this Karma wasn't supposed to be his!!" Ji Yin abruptly vanished, transformed into countless strands of light that merged into the mountain range. This was a unique search method that he hoped would

be able to locate Meng Hao.

The other Chosen in the mountain range used various other methods to try to track him down. This was especially true of Fan Dong'er. Her arm had been recovered by this point, but having been thwarted twice by Meng Hao, her pride had suffered nearly irrecoverably.

“Only by defeating him can I confirm my Dao heart!” she thought, her eyes gleaming with killing intent.

Fang Donghan was sitting quietly off in another location, watching everything play out, a smile on his face. His actions earlier had made him the subject of suspicion, but he didn’t care.

“Fang Hao. Meng Hao.... Interesting. I can’t wait until he runs into Fang Wei.”

Wang Mu’s face was grim. He felt that he was always a step too slow to catch Meng Hao. Every time they crossed paths, he hadn’t had the chance to truly engage him in combat. Currently, he sat with his right hand placed onto the ground in front of him. He closed his eyes, and his face went slack as he employed a secret technique. His soul was now merged into the land as he used his divine sense to search for Meng Hao.

Most anxious of all were the cultivators from Mount Sun, the Song Clan, the Li Clan, and the Church of the Immortal Emperor. Their Chosen had been captured by Meng Hao, which was a complete humiliation. Glum expressions could be seen on their Dao Protectors’ faces as they carried out their search.

“Dammit, if our cultivation bases weren’t sealed, then Meng Hao would never dare to be so arrogant!”

“He’s dead! Once we find him, he’ll be dead without a doubt!”

Everyone was looking for Meng Hao, and gradually, the search perimeter grew smaller. Everyone was getting closer to Meng Hao and his Immortal’s cave.

Nighttime... began to turn into dawn!

The bronze lamp's flame suddenly grew incredibly intense. It became a torch that illuminated the entire Immortal's cave. In fact, the light seeped out through the walls of the cave... to shine brightly in the outside world.

Meng Hao trembled as his blood suddenly began to flow in reverse. He started to bleed from his eyes, nose, ears and mouth, drops of which flew up and merged into the flame, causing it to burn even brighter.

Rumble!

The entire mountain range was shaking, and a roaring sound filled it as incredible pressure radiated out. Many of the cultivators began to tremble, and were forced by the incredible pressure to sit down cross-legged and begin meditating.

RUMBLE!

A second roaring sound rose up. At the same time, Meng Hao's Immortal's cave began to melt as a burning light rose up into the sky.

The ground was quaking even more severely, almost as if giants were running across it, and the intense pressure increased exponentially. On one particular mountain, countless Karma threads suddenly appeared, which then merged together into the shape of a person. It was Ji Yin, and blood was oozing out of his mouth.

He had no choice but to immediately sit down cross-legged and fight back with all the power he could muster.

As for Wang Mu, blood sprayed out of his mouth and he immediately began to meditate. Fan Dong'er and all the other Chosen were shaken and forced to meditate.

Next, a third roaring sound filled the air, and without exception, all of the Dao Protectors in the mountain range coughed up blood and sat down in meditation.

The mountains were trembling, and what seemed like a never-ending vortex appeared up above. Massive roaring sounds shook Heaven and Earth, and it was even possible to see the shape of the land changing!

Outside the mountains, in the Eastern Lands, Meng Hao's father and mother hovered in mid-air with Shui Dongliu, staring off at the mountains. A strange light could be seen gleaming in Shui Dongliu's eyes.

"The moment in which fate is changed!"

In the Milky Way Sea, the old man sat cross-legged on the ship. He slowly opened his eyes and looked toward the mountain range.

Back in the mountain range, in the location previously occupied by the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple, there was only a crater. However, at this moment, a figure slowly coalesced in the middle of that crater.

It was an old man wearing a dilapidated gray robe, and he was looking off in Meng Hao's direction.

RUMBLE!!

A fourth sound spread out, and this time it was filled with power that could tear open the sky. The blackness of night changed as the vast sky above the mountain range distorted, and then became a starry sky, seemingly that of ancient times.

Up in that starry sky, blurry figures could be seen, speeding along. There were numerous true dragons and mighty Immortal beasts, one after another.

A fifth sound echoed out. The land quaked, and countless mountains vanished as a Daoist rite temple suddenly appeared!

This was the real Daoist rite temple, with countless figures seated cross-legged in meditation. A towering pillar could be seen, seated atop which was an old man, giving a sermon on the Dao. Astonishingly, on top of his head... was a bronze oil lamp!

The flames emitted green smoke that rose up into the sky and, as the man flicked his sleeve, the smoke... transformed into a huge character.

'Immortal!'

In response to the materialization of the character, all of the figures in the Daoist rite temple began to prostrate themselves toward the old man.

The stars in the sky dimmed, and countless figures up above began to kowtow.

In that instant, the sun and moon stopped shining, and even the stars bowed their heads. All living things knelt in worship, and it seemed as if all creation were bowing down!

It was then that the sixth roaring sound blasted out. Boundless dazzling flames surrounded Meng Hao, sending an indescribably brilliant light shining out in all directions.

All of the cultivators in the entire mountain range could now see Meng Hao as he slowly rose up into the air, surrounded by boundless light.

He was cross-legged, and shockingly, a bronze lamp could be seen above his head!

He looked almost exactly like the old man!

That was especially the case... when Meng Hao, bathed in light, rose up to superimpose over the image of the old man. Everyone was completely shocked.

Meng Hao's mind was blank, and his body was currently withering. All of the blood in his veins poured into the bronze lamp, which then began to burn with the final vestiges of his life force.

From the onlookers' perspective, Meng Hao was now replacing that old man!

All of the figures who were bowed in worship were no longer worshipping the old man, but rather, Meng Hao! The sun and moon trembled, and the stars went dim. All of the dragons and other Immortal beasts kowtowed in worship.

Everyone was prostrated in worship, even the almighty beings who plucked stars, the enormous giant who shouldered the starry sky, even Heaven and the Earth!

It was in this moment that a seventh roaring sound could be heard!

It filled all of the lands of South Heaven, almost like the tolling of a bell.

It did not pass out of Planet South Heaven, and yet... in the other Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple on the Ninth Mountain, the temple where incense still burned and its legacy still existed, the tolling of the bell could be heard, and countless Immortal figures appeared, astonishing everyone on the Ninth Mountain!

At the same time, back in the lands of South Heaven, in midair above the mountain range, the bronze lamp on Meng Hao's head... faded away completely in response to the seventh roaring sound!

The flame was extinguished, but light still spread out!

A wisp of green smoke rose up above the bronze lamp, a smoke that seemed to embody a great Dao. In the moment that it appeared, it transformed into the character 'Immortal'!

A single character made up of green smoke, causing the minds of all onlookers to reel.

Next, the 'Immortal' character once again dissipated into green smoke, which then rushed toward Meng Hao. It poured in through his nose, mouth, and ears, then circulated through his body, linking together to become... an illusory meridian!

It was... an Immortal meridian!

The moment the Immortal meridian appeared, Meng Hao felt a tremor run through his body. Everything in his body felt as if it were changing. His bones, his flesh, his blood. All of it was completely transforming.

Rumbling filled the air, as if an Immortal were being born inside of him. His energy surged, and the sky and land darkened.

His Dharma Idol appeared behind him, and his cultivation base experienced an astonishing transformation!

Fifty percent of a true Immortal!

Sixty percent of a true Immortal!

Seventy percent of a true Immortal!

Eighty percent of a true Immortal!

Meng Hao's cultivation base rose in shocking fashion, and his Immortal qi grew more intense. His flesh and blood were reaching the pinnacle of power!

As he sat there cross-legged, he looked almost exactly like an Immortal!

The Immortal meridian was complete, and the path to Immortality was open!

He did not need some true Immortal destiny that appeared once every 10,000 years! He did not need some Immortality Illumination Vine! Meng Hao's Immortality was completely his own. He... would tread his own path of true Immortality!

He was not a true Immortal yet. However, based on the path he was treading, once that illusory Immortal meridian became true and complete... then he would, beyond a doubt, be a true Immortal!

When the day came that he opened 100 meridians, because he had this extra Immortal meridian, he would have more Immortal meridians than others. He would be... a 101-meridian Immortal!

When it came to those 100 meridians, whether you had 1 extra or 10,000 extra, they were all extra. Thus... having 1 extra was the same as having 10,000, which was the same as having 100,000,000, which was the same as having an infinite amount!

Everything rumbled as Meng Hao's eyes snapped open. The brilliant light that filled the world suddenly faded, and Meng Hao's voice filled the entire mountain range.

"Fan Dong'er. Ji Yin. Zhao Yifan. Who of you... will fight me!?"

\*

1. Yes, the title of this chapter is a mere exclamation point. Either it was intentional, or maybe Er Gen accidentally hit the delete key at the wrong point. He doesn't tend to go back to fix mistakes... Join the contest to come up with good title by leaving your idea in the

comments.

# Chapter 827: Never Too Late for Revenge!

Meng Hao's voice echoed out through the vast expanse of the sky. He hovered in midair, filled with power that held all under Heaven in contempt. A brilliant light surrounded him, and the Dharma Idol behind him did not look illusory in any way. Furthermore, he emanated pulses of Immortal might!

That... was a pressure that exceeded that of a false Immortal!

That... was eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal!

He hovered cross-legged in midair, looking every bit like an Immortal. His eyes appeared to contain stars, and his voice was awe-inspiring as it echoed through the lands like thunder.

Wild colors flashed in the sky, and the wind screamed. The cultivators in the surrounding rugged mountains could only watch, their minds filled with roaring. This was especially true of the three whose names Meng Hao had called out. Their minds were filled with panic and shock.

Fan Dong'er's face had completely fallen, and she was panting as she stared at Meng Hao. Her heart was in tumult, and her face was a mass of disbelief.

"True Immortal might! He actually has true Immortal might!"

Furthest away of the three was Zhao Yifan, who stood on a far off mountain, his face pale. He had suffered severe injuries, and had had no choice but to withdraw from this struggle for good fortune. Now, he gazed silently at Meng Hao hovering in midair, and began to breathe heavily. The desire to fight burned in his eyes, but his pupils constricted, and it was easy to see that inwardly, he was anything but calm.

The last person who Meng Hao called out was Ji Yin. He sat cross-legged on another mountaintop, looking at Meng Hao, face expressionless but hands clenched tightly at his side.

The entire mountain range was completely silent except for the sound of Meng Hao's voice echoing about. Countless Chosen and innumerable Dao

Protectors looked on with trembling minds.

It was in this moment that the restriction on the airspace... suddenly vanished!

It was as if the restriction on the airspace had been in place only in preparation for good fortune to appear within Meng Hao.

"I'll fight you!" someone bellowed. A figure flew out from the mountains, a young man with eyebrows like swords and eyes like stars. It was none other than Wang Mu!

When he flew out, his fighting spirit burned brightly, and his heart was filled with rage. None of the three names Meng Hao had called out were his, which he took to be a personal humiliation.

As he flew, he performed a double-handed incantation, calling the wind and summoning the rain. Everything trembled as it all transformed into black dragons that roared as they shot toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao looked over coldly at the incoming Wang Mu. As he neared, Meng Hao waved his hand to unleash the Star Plucking Magic!

Backed by Meng Hao's eighty-percent true Immortal cultivation base, the Star Plucking Magic caused everything to grow dark as an enormous hand appeared and shot toward Wang Mu.

Rumbling filled the air, and Wang Mu let out a shout, extended his hand and pointed out with his index finger. An incredible power exploded out that caused the descending, illusory hand to suddenly stop in place.

Wang Mu chuckled coldly and continued to charge toward Meng Hao. He performed another incantation gesture and then pointed toward Meng Hao. A will of extermination exploded out, turning into a shocking energy that seemed to contain infinite destructive power. 1

Before that power could even get near, Meng Hao took a step forward, appearing directly in front of Wang Mu, whereupon his hand slapped out with incredible speed. Wang Mu's face filled with shock as Meng Hao completely ignored his extermination attack, and in fact, allowed it to land on him. At the same time, his slap connected with Wang Mu.

A boom rang out and Wang Mu gave a muffled grunt. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he tumbled backward. A manic look appeared on his face, and he was just about to charge back into the fight when Meng Hao snorted and transformed into a golden roc.

The golden roc spread its wings, causing golden light to explode out. Then the roc disappeared as it transformed into a golden beam that shot toward Wang Mu. Numerous mountains appeared, which linked together into a mountain range that also slammed down toward Wang Mu.

Incredible rumbling sounds rose up. Wang Mu roared angrily and struggled with all of his might, but Meng Hao spun toward him like a tornado. Suddenly, a blood colored glow ignited and bashed into Wang Mu's shoulder.

A cracking sound rang out as Wang Mu's right shoulder was shattered. Intense pain filled him, and a cold sweat instantly broke out all over his body. In the blink of an eye, he began to wither up, and yet, he gritted his teeth, clearly not willing to give up the fight.

"Screw off!" said Meng Hao, punching Wang Mu in the middle of his stomach with eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal. Blood showered out of Wang Mu's mouth, and his entire body trembled. Meng Hao grabbed Wang Mu's bag of holding as Wang Mu himself shot like a meteor down to the ground, where he slammed into the earth. He coughed up more blood, and his mind was filled with anxiety. He was completely shocked by the level of Meng Hao's power.

All of the surrounding cultivators looking on gasped. The Chosen's eyes were wide, and the Dao Protectors were watching with serious expressions.

"He's almost a true Immortal!!"

"He got all of the good fortune of the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple! Dammit!"

As the onlookers' expressions flickered, Meng Hao gave a cold snort and then swept his gaze across the crowds until he found the Dao Protectors from Mount Sun and the Li Clan. Killing intent flickered in his eyes as he

looked at the two men.

Their faces fell as Meng Hao extended his right hand, within which was the Lightning Cauldron. Electricity danced as Meng Hao suddenly switched positions with someone standing near the Li Clan Dao Protector. As soon as he appeared, he stamped his right foot viciously onto the ground. A boom rattled out, and the ground was shattered. A blood-colored vortex sprang up, and just as the old man was about to flee, Meng Hao pointed out with his right index finger.

The Eighth Demon Sealing Hex was unleashed, and the old man's face fell. He instantly froze in place, and Meng Hao closed in. Meng Hao had an incredible fleshly body, and eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal, all of which he poured into three powerful punches that slammed into the old man in quick succession.

Blood sprayed from the old man's mouth, and his face went pale. Roaring, he performed an incantation gesture, causing a divine ability to appear. An enormous magical bottle materialized in midair; it radiated boundless energy that instantly surged to envelop Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's Dharma Idol roared, which caused everything in the area to shake. Ripples spread out, and the magical bottle distorted. Even as the old man's face began to fall, Meng Hao's Dharma Idol punched out.

Booms echoed out as Meng Hao and the old man fought back and forth in midair. The Blood Demon Grand Magic appeared, a swirling blood-red vortex that turned into a Blood Demon head that viciously headbutted the old man.

Blood spurted out of the old man's mouth, and his body withered rapidly. He fell back, his expression one of astonishment and ferocity. At this point, he prepared to unseal his cultivation base, only to be shocked to find... that he couldn't!

"What...?" The old man's face flickered as Meng Hao once again turned into a huge golden roc. Blinding golden light flickered as he shot toward the old man with indescribable speed. The onlookers only heard a miserable shriek. When the golden light finally faded away, they could see

that the old man's head had completely exploded into pieces.

Meng Hao took his bag of holding, and before the old man's Nascent Divinity could escape, had his Dharma Idol grab him and pop him into its mouth.

An air of ferocity filled the area, and gasps could be heard in all directions. Meng Hao's body flickered as he next moved toward the Mount Sun Dao Protector. It was time to collect interest from the debts incurred by those who had ambushed him earlier.

The Mount Sun Dao Protector's face flickered, and he shot backward, attempting to unseal his cultivation base. Then, his face completely fell when he also realized... that he couldn't unseal it!

His scalp went numb and he fled as fast as possible.

"Fellow Daoists!" he screamed miserably, "join forces with me to kill this bastard!!"

Immediately, four or five people flew forward, clearly intent on blocking Meng Hao's path. However, it was at this point that electricity danced, and Meng Hao used Form Displacement Transposition to appear directly in front of the old man from Mount Sun. His expression was cold, and his eyes flickered with killing intent as he raised his right hand. The Blood Demon Grand Magic spun, a massive vortex that instantly enveloped the old Dao Protector.

Rumbling filled the air, mixed with the old man's bloodcurdling screams. Meng Hao and the old man were inside the vortex for only a few breaths of time before the four or five interlopers arrived and launched divine abilities. The blood-colored vortex faded, and Meng Hao's body flickered and reappeared off in the distance. As for the old man from Mount Sun, he was nothing more than a skeleton.

All of his flesh and blood, his cultivation base and soul, had been absorbed!

"Kill him!"

"Join forces to wipe him out!"

"He's on the verge of true Immortality! Refine his body and we might be able to concoct a True Immortality Pill!" Seven or eight people flew out, including several Chosen and Dao Protectors. After joining forces with the people who had just attacked, they made a force of more than a dozen that transformed into beams of prismatic light that charged toward Meng Hao.

Another group of about ten people approached from another direction.

There were others who looked on with flickering eyes. They had to admit that Meng Hao was powerful, but he was only one person. In their minds, that wasn't enough to shake all of them together.

Dozens of people closed in on Meng Hao, who hovered there in midair. Just as they were about to launch their deadly attacks, Meng Hao laughed coldly. The image of his father's first sword form appeared in his mind as he took a deep breath, bent his body like a bow and raised his right hand.

In the blink of an eye, he appeared to become like a black hole, sucking in all of the power of Heaven and Earth. Sword qi appeared, and as the people closed in, Meng Hao's hand suddenly chopped downward.

An astonishing beam of sword qi exploded out, slashing about in all directions. Rumbling filled the air, and the dozens of attackers shot backward, faces filled with shock. There were even two or three who were directly slashed by the sword qi and then shattered to pieces, leaving behind only bloodcurdling screams.

Meng Hao used this slight pause to again utilize the Lightning Cauldron, and Form Displacement Transposition to... close in on Fan Dong'er!

"Fan Dong'er, you wanted to kill me, right? Well, here I am!"

Fan Dong'er's face fell. As of this moment, Meng Hao's power made him virtually invincible. There was no way for anyone to stand in his way. So far, Fan Dong'er had lost an arm and been seriously injured. Although she had recovered some, the process wasn't complete, and she knew that there was no way she could win against Meng Hao. Her face fell as she retreated backward.

As soon as she started backing up, Meng Hao became a golden roc that

shot toward her with incredible speed. Golden light filled the air, and he was upon her in the blink of an eye.

From a distance, everyone could see the beautiful Fan Dong'er, her hair in disarray, facing up against a gigantic, golden roc, which extended its claws viciously toward her.

Many of the surrounding Chosen greatly admired Fan Dong'er, so when they saw what was happening, their faces fell. There were even seven or eight who immediately flew out toward Meng Hao.

"Meng Hao, you're pushing things too far!!" cried Fan Dong'er miserably.  
"Who cares!" replied Meng Hao coolly. The golden roc closed in.

\*

1. We are in a slightly odd situation here because Renegade Immortal precedes ISSTH in terms of when it was written, and yet a lot more of ISSTH has been translated. The following information contains what could be considered some minor spoilers in terms of Renegade Immortal, but I think it's important to impart this information. Any Chinese reader who was a fan of Renegade Immortal and then read ISSTH would probably notice the following points. Both the 10th Wang Clan Patriarch and Wang Mu have now used this ability of "calling the wind and summoning the rain." If you want to check previous times it was used by the Patriarch, go to [chapter 630](#), [647](#), and [679](#). Long story short, Wang Lin, MC of Renegade Immortal, frequently used an ability "calling the wind and summoning the rain." Furthermore, in [chapter 645](#), the 10th Wang Clan Patriarch mentions "three finger attacks" created by the ancestor of the Wang Clan, one of which was the "Extermination Finger." Not only does that seem to be the same attack Wang Mu is using here, guess what... Wang Lin frequently used a move called "Extermination Finger," the exact same Chinese characters. Obviously, there was a lot of speculation during these parts of the story by Chinese readers, linking the Wang Clan of this story, with Wang Lin of that story.



# Chapter 828: Invincible!

Fan Dong'er's pupils shrank into tiny dots, and she shot backward, simultaneously performing a double-handed incantation. Instantly, a boundless sea appeared behind her, made up of endless heavenly bodies, even suns and moons.

"Ninth Sea God World!" she cried. In response, the huge sea behind her grew exponentially in size. In the blink of an eye, it had covered the entire area. Next, the heavenly bodies inside of it all began to shoot toward Meng Hao.

At the same time, the eight Chosen closed in on him.

"Without a face, a single word, flames of war unify!" As Meng Hao transformed into a golden roc and shot forward, he began to change color. He was now bright red. The Blood Demon Grand Magic appeared around him, forming a massive vortex.

The vortex then turned into a face that emanated shocking, blood-colored ripples that spread out in all directions. The incoming group of Chosen were instantly affected. Then, the face opened its mouth and cried a soundless cry, immediately shaking their minds.

Instantly, smoke began to seep out from the tops of their heads, rising up as if from the flames of war! Shocking rumbling filled the air.

Suddenly, their blood began to flow backward, and then their bodies began to fall apart. In the blink of an eye, they were covered with masses of blood and gore. Faces filled with astonishment, they coughed up blood and were forced to retreat.

"Sundered clouds, a bloody rain, seas that cover the sky!" Meng Hao transformed into a huge, crimson roc that shot toward Fan Dong'er and the Ninth Sea. As they barreled toward each other, sundered clouds appeared up above, and bloody rain fell, which transformed into a sea of blood! Shockingly, two massive seas were now visible in the sky up above.

One was the Ninth Sea, and the other was a sea of blood. Above the

Ninth Sea, Goddess Fan Dong'er glowed with boundless light. In the sea of blood, Meng Hao's Dharma Idol stood like a shocking giant. The two slammed into each other, and a massive boom echoed out.

The sky shook, and the land quaked and began to split. Everyone fell back, shocked by what they were seeing.

As the two seas collided, Meng Hao's roc form shot directly toward Fan Dong'er and viciously raked out at her with sharp claws.

Rumble!

Fan Dong'er performed a double-handed incantation. Nine sea dragons materialized around her and roared as they moved to block Meng Hao. However, sea dragons are not really dragons, only enormous serpents. The golden roc's vicious claws ripped them to shreds. Their miserable shrieks were still echoing in the air when Meng Hao finally reached Fan Dong'er.

Sharp claws slashed at her, and blood sprayed from her mouth. She fell back yet again, her hair in disarray. Glaring at Meng Hao, she performed a double-handed incantation that caused the conch shell to appear again. Even as she began to unleash her divine ability, Meng Hao and his Dharma Idol roared, and he rotated his cultivation base to full power.

Shocking rumbling filled the area, and the sky went dim. The sound from the conch... was unexpectedly suppressed, and began to tremble violently. Fan Dong'er coughed up another mouthful of blood.

At the same moment in which she began to retreat, Meng Hao's right hand extended in the Star Plucking Magic.

Fan Dong'er's face fell once again, and she waved her hand, causing countless illusory, sensuous mermaids to fill the area. It took only a moment for them to organize into a huge formation that moved to block Meng Hao.

Meng Hao snorted coldly, and a bright, bloody glow rose up into the air. The Blood Demon Grand Magic was unleashed at full power. In the blink of an eye, a blood-colored vortex appeared, fully three hundred meters wide. However, as Meng Hao surged forward, all that could be seen was a

gigantic Blood Demon head that directly headbutted the mermaid spell formation.

The resulting boom filled the entire mountain range. The spell formation collapsed, and the mermaids withered away. Meng Hao's Blood Demon head vanished, but he pressed forward, his body shining with bloody light. A fist descended, and a huge boom rattled out. Fan Dong'er retreated again, blood spurting from her mouth, her face filled with astonishment.

This version of Meng Hao left everyone feeling shocked to the extreme. Meng Hao's momentum was impossible to stop!

"Die!" he said, slashing his hand toward Fan Dong'er's neck. Just when it seemed to be on the verge of making contact, Fan Dong'er let out a miserable shriek. Her body began to twist and distort as she transformed into a blue flood dragon. Her mouth opened wide as she shot forward to swallow up the golden roc.

There was a boom, and the flood dragon collapsed. Meng Hao's golden roc also shuddered and vanished, revealed Meng Hao himself.

Fan Dong'er took advantage of this opportunity to use a secret magic. Her body suddenly experienced a rapid weakening in exchange for a burst of speed that put her far off in the distance. Then she waved her hand, causing the blue bracelet on her wrist to fly out. It shattered in midair, forming a wall of fragments that resembled heavenly bodies. It was as if the two areas she and Meng Hao occupied were now completely separated by a huge divide.

Fan Dong'er glared at Meng Hao in a way that seemed to suggest she was committing his facial features to memory.

"We will meet again," she said through gritted teeth. "Next time, I'm going to kill you!" She performed a double-handed incantation, after which, rumbling could be heard as a huge door began to coalesce behind her.

That door lead directly to the Ninth Sea God World!

Killing intent flickered in Meng Hao's eyes, and he was just about to tear apart the divide composed of heavenly bodies when the seven or eight Chosen who worshipped Fan Dong'er moved to block his way.

They shot forward with incredible speed, immediately unleashing divine abilities. The images of a true dragon and a flaming phoenix appeared, as well as a vicious golden tiger. One of the Chosen waved his hand to produce 1-meter-long giant ants; more than a thousand of them filled the sky as they moved to block Meng Hao.

"There's not going to be a next time!" said Meng Hao, snorting coldly. He closed his eyes and took a deep breath. Behind him, his Dharma Idol began to shrink down in size and then superimposed itself over his body.

In that instant, the Immortal qi inside of him suddenly exploded out. In that instant, he was the Dharma Idol, and the Dharma Idol was him!

The eight people closing in on him were instantly shaken inwardly. An intense sense of deadly crisis filled their hearts, and they were suddenly overwhelmed with the sensation that Meng Hao was too dangerous to even get close to.

As their faces fell, Meng Hao began to stride forward. The air vibrated, and the two Chosen nearest Meng Hao fell back in astonishment, blood spraying from their mouths. He didn't even attack them. The mere rise in his energy injured them, causing their terror toward him to climb even higher.

All of these people gasped and looked at Meng Hao in shock. Their bodies stopped in place, and they didn't dare to move forward even an inch. Everyone in the area was now beginning to back up, fully aware of how powerful Meng Hao was.

Even Fan Dong'er's face completely fell.

Meng Hao took his first step forward, and the illusory Immortal meridian inside of him rotated and began to emanate scintillating light that swirled around Meng Hao. His second step took him through the air and completely into the divide. His body trembled a bit as he passed into it, and yet, he was able to take a third step!

At that moment, countless gasps could be heard from the surrounding cultivators.

"He fused with his Dharma Idol! That's something only people in the Immortal Realm can do! He's not in the Immortal Realm, though he's immeasurably close to it, and yet he can still successfully fuse with it!"

"Is he really a cultivator from the lands of South Heaven...?"

"This Meng Hao is just too powerful! If he doesn't perish in this battle, then he'll become completely famous in the Ninth Mountain!"

All of the exclamations came when Meng Hao took his third step. When that step fell, the divide began to vibrate; clearly he was just about to emerge from within it.

By this point, the huge door behind Fan Dong'er was now fully visible. The door began to open, and Fan Dong'er let out a quiet sigh. She gave Meng Hao one final cold glance, and then turned to enter the huge door.

"Inky!" Meng Hao suddenly said.

As soon as his voice rang out from the divide, the listless eyes of the corpse that followed Fan Dong'er suddenly flickered. Long strands of black hair floated out and began to wrap around her.

Fan Dong'er's face filled with panic and shock, and she nearly coughed up a mouthful of blood. Just when she was about to step into the door, rumbling filled the air. Meng Hao had taken his fourth step, and emerged from within the divide. In that instant, his Immortal qi was in full circulation, and he stretched his hand out in a claw-like gesture toward Fan Dong'er, who screamed shrilly.

Fan Dong'er was already halfway through the invisible door, and just about to vanish. Meng Hao frowned. He could sense an incredible feeling of peril from beyond the door, and yet didn't hesitate. He unleashed the Star Plucking Magic, and a gigantic, illusory hand appeared. Just in the moment when Fan Dong'er was about to disappear.... the giant hand grabbed her by the hair.

The hand yanked back viciously. In that moment, a muffled grunt could

be heard from Fan Dong'er. She vanished, and the illusory door disappeared amidst a rumbling boom. Meng Hao was left with only a handful of hair, the roots dripping with blood, which caused his expression to darken.

Meng Hao looked at the hair for a moment and then thought back to one of the magical techniques he had learned in the ancient Demon Immortal Sect. It was a cursing magic, which he immediately unleashed, causing the hair in his hand to burn with green flames. Then, he blew out the flames and performed an incantation, which resulted in a single black hair materializing in front of him. He quickly put the strand of hair away. He now had a powerful weapon to use next time he encountered Fan Dong'er.

Everything was silent. All eyes were on Meng Hao, and no one was speaking. As far as the Chosen were concerned, Meng Hao was incredibly intimidating. Furthermore, because the Dao Protectors were unable to loosen the seals on their cultivation bases... they were no match for him either.

The shock was especially intense among the people who had fought with Meng Hao before. All of them began to edge back, hearts filled with astonishment. Meng Hao's gaze swept across the crowd until they finally came to rest on Ji Yin, who was still sitting cross-legged on the distant mountain peak.

From start to finish, Ji Yin hadn't moved from that mountain, and had watched Meng Hao achieve eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal, as well as his apparent invincibility.

"Ji Yin, you took something that belongs to me," Meng Hao said calmly. "Are you really sure you want to sow Karma between us?"

"You also took something that belongs to me," Ji Yin replied slowly, looking over at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered with coldness as he transformed into a roc that surged with Immortal qi. He flew into the air and shot directly toward Ji Yin.

He moved with incredible speed, surrounded by a glow of blood. This was not a golden roc, this was a crimson roc!

“Taking care of you will be simple!” said Meng Hao as he closed in. The words were simple, but they contained a profoundly domineering air. Anyone who heard them felt shock in their hearts.

It must be said that although Ji Yin had met defeat when struggling to become Dao Child of the Ji Clan, he was still a Ji Clan Chosen!

And the Ji Clan... ruled the Ninth Mountain!

“Laughable!” said Ji Yin coolly.

# Chapter 829: Severing Versus Hexing!

The words echoed out, and Ji Yin's eyes flickered. As Meng Hao bore down on him, he slowly lifted his right hand and pointed toward Meng Hao.

Ripples immediately appeared around him as two black fish materialized, which then twisted back and forth as they sped toward Meng Hao.

As they neared, Meng Hao let out a cold snort. He waved his right hand, causing eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal to surge out. It transformed into a shocking sound which shattered the air in all directions and then transformed into a blood-colored vortex. The vortex was like a giant mouth that directly swallowed up the two fish.

In that instant, however, the fish leaped upward. Shockingly, they transformed in midair into two black dragons, which roared as they proceeded onward toward Meng Hao. Meng Hao snorted again and punched out. A mountain range appeared, which then rumbled through the air to crush down onto the two black dragons.

A boom rattled out as the black dragons crumbled to pieces. However, there were two black strands of light that were apparently impossible to blot out. They instantly formed a sealing mark on Meng Hao's palm, and then began to sink into his flesh. In that moment, everyone who knew Meng Hao suddenly felt their minds tremble, as if there were some amorphous force interacting with the Karma that existed between him and them.

A serious expression filled Meng Hao's face, but a cold smile could be seen on his lips. He advanced, as if he didn't even notice the fluctuations in the Karma. He appeared in front of Ji Yin and raised his right hand, within which could be seen a blood-colored vortex. He shoved his hand toward Ji Yin.

Ji Yin's expression was the same as ever. However, his eyes flickered, and all of the Karma that surrounded him surged, transforming into countless

illusory images behind him. These were all the people who he remembered, or who remembered him.

Shockingly, one of those figures was Meng Hao.

All of the figures had Karma Threads attached to them, which then exploded with energy. It was as if Meng Hao was now fighting back against all of them at the same time.

Rumbling filled the air and nearby mountain peaks crumbled. Meng Hao and Ji Yin rose up into the air, and in the blink of an eye they had exchanged over a hundred moves.

The Blood Demon rumbled out, and Ji Yin frowned. However, he didn't retreat. The Karma attached to him glittered, and then spread out to lock down the entire area. The glow of the confinement magic fought back against the Blood Demon, and was not affected in the slightest by the gravitational force it emitted.

Ji Yin waved his right hand again, then performed an incantation. Then he pointed at the countless figures behind him, and the one that belonged to Meng Hao began to tremble, and then coughed up blood.

Meng Hao's face flickered, and he felt a stabbing pain in his chest. However, his eyes flickered, and he forced himself to take another step forward. As he raised his hand, Countless mountain ranges appeared, including the Ninth Mountain, which then crushed down toward Ji Yin.

Rumbling filled the air as Meng Hao's Blood Demon head smashed forward. Wild colors flashed in the sky, and Ji Yin was forced into retreat. An incantation gesture flashed in his hand, and the boundless Karma that surrounded him began to spread out and transform into threads that shot toward Meng Hao.

"When it comes to the Dao of Karma, you must not let yourself be contaminated. If you do, an accounting must eventually be made!" As Ji Yin spoke, the Karma Threads began to entwine around Meng Hao. As of this moment, Meng Hao's mind was trembling, and he was secretly shocked. Seeing the Karma Threads threatening to bind him up, he threw his head back and roared. Immediately, his body began to expand, as if his

Dharma Idol were struggling to break free from the boundless Karma.

“Karmic Severing!” said Ji Yin, his eyes glinting coldly. Gazing steadily at Meng Hao, he lifted his right hand up into the air and then chopped it down.

As he uttered the words, the entire sky, all the lands, the whole world suddenly went deathly silent. It was as if all the natural laws had changed, or were influenced. Time almost seemed to stand still.

Absolutely everything went completely silent.

Meng Hao was locked down tight in midair. And yet, he still managed to lift his right hand and point toward Ji Yin.

Although he said nothing, the power of the Seventh Demon Sealing Hex, Karmic Hexing, was being unleashed.

One was the power of Karmic Severing, the other was the power of Karmic Hexing!

In Karmic Severing, the Karma Threads are severed, and life becomes death!

In Karmic Hexing, Karma is restrained. The more Karma one has, the more powerful the effects!

The Karma that swirled around Ji Yin seemed terrifying, but from Meng Hao’s perspective, he was the perfect target for Karmic Hexing!

As he was rooted there in place, countless flickering threads of numerous shades and hues of color began to emerge from within Meng Hao. These threads were all of Meng Hao’s Karma.

They started out as a solid clump, which then spread out in all directions. Some of the Karma Threads were connected to nearby cultivators, but most spread out over the vast lands of South Heaven.

“I have been shrouded by the Dao of Karma since I was young,” said Ji Yin. “I will not sever all of your Karma, only one thread. However, that will mean that you can never step into the Immortal Realm.” Although his voice was calm, he was actually quite apprehensive about Meng Hao. That

was why, when he finally attacked, he did so with his most powerful Daoist magic!

He gestured slightly with his hand, and Meng Hao's Karma seemed to ripple as if someone was flipping through them like they were pages of a book, then begin to rapidly connect to Ji Yin's Karma.

The scene that was playing out in front of the nearby cultivators caused the expressions of even the Chosen to fill with shock.

"So this is the power of the Ji Clan...."

"The Dao of Karma is something nobody under Heaven can fight back against. According to the legends, Lord Ji used the Dao of Karma to place the Heavens over Lord Li!"

"No wonder this Ji Yin was able to contend for the spot of Dao Child. I heard that there was something bizarre about his birth, that he had Karma on him from the moment he appeared in the world. Supposedly, his skill in the Dao of Karma is incredible."

"Meng Hao... is definitely dead!"

However, in the instant in which Ji Yin was browsing through Meng Hao's Karma, his face suddenly flickered with disbelief. Although no observer could see it, all of the Karma that surrounded him was suddenly thrown into chaos.

Then, Meng Hao's karma threads began to separate. Not just one, but all of them. Shocking rumbling sounds filled the air as the Karma Threads joining the two of them began to pull apart from each other.

At the same time, the Karma Threads connecting him and Meng Hao began to snap one after another. Each thread emitted shocking booms as they snapped, and the Karmic connection between the two was rapidly broken!

At the same time, the Karma Threads around Meng Hao slowly began to grow dim, and he was no longer locked in place, but could move normally. He hovered there in midair, staring impassively at Ji Yin.

As for Ji Yin, he was trembling, and his face was filled with disbelief. His Karma threads were in complete disorder, and rumbling sounds pulsed out from them. It almost seemed like countless screams were echoing out.

His Karma threads spread out in all directions, causing the air around Ji Yin to ripple. Then the Karma threads began to merge together. Brilliant light would burst out every time one collided with another.

Ji Yin was trembling. It was at this point that one of his Karma Threads drooped down onto him and bored into him like a sealing mark, the power of which then spread out to every corner of his body. After that, another Karma Thread descended onto him, bored into him, and vanished. Then another. And another.

As more and more of the Karma Threads vanished, Ji Yin's appearance was finally becoming visible.

The onlookers were shocked at this development, and were unsure of what exactly was happening. Moments ago, Ji Yin had clearly been unleashing the Ji Clan's Karmic Severing. And yet a moment later, Ji Yin was suddenly in a losing position.

All of it happened in the space of a few breaths of time. Now, people were able to see Ji Yin's facial features for the first time ever. As soon as people's eyes fell onto Ji Yin, the sound of gasps could be heard, and eyes went wide.

What they saw was the face of a young woman, beautiful, with pale skin. On her forehead could be seen an image depicting a pair of fish, and her entire person exuded an air of sickly beauty.

She... was Ji Yin!

Even in the Ji Clan, very few people knew that Ji Yin was a woman!

Everyone looked on silently as Ji Yin was revealed. She trembled as she sensed her cultivation base fading away. The Karma that she herself had cultivated was now not even under her own control. It was as if some astonishing power were interfering with it, allowing her opponent to use it to lock her down!

"This is impossible...." she thought, her mind reeling. In the entire time that she had cultivated Karma, she had never encountered a situation like this before. It left her feeling... completely terrified!

"You...." Her face was pale as she looked at Meng Hao. At this moment, the last of her Karma threads bored into her body, becoming a portion of what was sealing her.

As of now, everyone could clearly see that she was a young woman wearing a long black robe. The paleness of her face was a sharp contrast to the darkness of her robe, and for some reason, the contrast made her seem incredibly fragile.

"How are you doing this?" she asked.

Meng Hao's expression was placid, his eyes cold as he stepped forward. He stood before Ji Yin, who now had no cultivation base, and was incapable of any struggle. He reached out, grabbed her, and threw her into his bag of holding.

As of that moment, everyone was filled with utter shock. As they looked at Meng Hao, they wondered what unfathomable secrets he carried.

The onlookers didn't really understand what had just occurred in the battle; only Meng Hao and Ji Yin were aware of the frightening truth. Meng Hao had fallen victim to the Ji Clan's Karmic Severing before, and knew how terrifying it would have been if Ji Yin had succeeded.

As for his Karmic Hexing, it was the bane of those who pursued the Dao of Karma. The more Karma someone had, the more powerful its hexing effects, which made it especially shocking when used against the Ji Clan.

It was at this point that a voice rang out from the crowd.

"Kill him! As long as he lives, he retains all the good fortune! He can't be allowed to remain alive!"

"He already captured Taiyang Zi, Li Ling'er, Sun Hai, Fang Yunyi, and Song Luodan. Now he has Ji Yin! This guy's set a record for creating calamities! He's definitely going to end up dead!"

“He must die! He might be strong, but he’s only one person!

“He can fight back against the Dao of Karma, which means he’s definitely hiding some precious treasure! It’s probably good fortune from the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple!” As the voice drifted through the area, it was obvious that this person was trying to stir up the crowd to attack Meng Hao.

People’s eyes began to flicker in response to the voice. How could they not understand what this person’s intentions were? After all, his argument made sense.

Even as their hearts began to surge, killing intent flickered in Meng Hao’s eyes. The Lightning Cauldron danced with electricity, and Meng Hao vanished. When he reappeared, shockingly, he was standing directly next to a man wearing a wide bamboo hat.

Meng Hao’s sudden appearance caused the man’s face to fall. This, of course, was the person who had just spoken. He tried to retreat backward, but Meng Hao was too fast. He burst out with eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal, causing rumbling to fill the air as he punched out seven times in quick succession. The young man in the wide bamboo hat was crushed as easily as dried weeds, and exploded into a haze of blood.

Meng Hao took his bamboo hat and bag of holding, then turned to face the dozens of figures who were currently bearing down on him. Behind them were hundreds of other cultivators, all flying toward him to attack together.

“You shouldn’t be in such a hurry to attack me,” Meng Hao said coolly. “Starting from now, and lasting until the time you leave the lands of South Heaven... we’re going to play a little game!

“A game of cat and mouse!” His body flickered as he used Form Displacement Transposition to suddenly appear far off in the distance. Earlier, he had escaped an ambush with only fifty percent of the power of a true Immortal. Now that he had eighty, if he wanted to leave this place, there was nobody who could stop him.

When everyone in the area heard his words, their minds filled with

shock.

# Chapter 830: Evacuation!

Meng Hao transformed into a beam of prismatic light that shot off into the distance. Hundreds of people trailed behind him in pursuit, but as of now, most had cultivation bases that didn't compare to his at all, and the others were incapable of releasing the seals that would make them his match. Furthermore, Meng Hao had the Heaven-defying Lightning Cauldron and its Form Displacement Transposition. Therefore, it only took a few hours for him to completely lose any pursuers.

The hundreds of people who remained behind fell silent. After a while, some of them just decided to give up; they immediately flew up into the air to leave Planet South Heaven. However, there were still quite a few who weren't willing to give in so easily.

This was especially true of the sects and clans whose Young Lords and Ladies had been captured by Meng Hao. They obviously could not leave, and had no choice but to join together to search for Meng Hao.

By this point, they didn't care about the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple's good fortune at all. It had all been acquired by Meng Hao. Therefore, it was easy to imagine how, once everyone left Planet South Heaven, it wouldn't take long before Meng Hao's name was spread throughout the Ninth Mountain.

Meng Hao now sped along silently through the mountains, wearing a wide bamboo hat. The hat was actually quite miraculous; after putting it on, his aura was completely concealed, making him completely unfathomable. He could even use the hat to change his appearance.

If that were all there was to it, it wouldn't be a big deal, and the item could be considered as useless as chicken bones. After all, even after changing his appearance and hiding his aura, any intelligent person who had seen him take the hat would know it was him as soon as they saw the hat itself.

However... the bamboo hat had another function. After putting it on his head, the music of a great Dao surrounded him. Although it wasn't very

clear, he felt incredibly tranquil once the music entered his ears.

Meng Hao felt that it wasn't a bad item, so he put it on as he began to rifle through the bags of holding he had acquired. Wang Mu's bag of holding had quite a few miscellaneous objects in it that caused Meng Hao's eyes to shine. The Dao Protectors' bags were also filled to the brim.

"Rich! These Chosen from outside South Heaven are all totally rich!" His eyes shone as brightly as two suns. After quickly putting the bags of holding away, his body flickered as he sped onward.

Two hours later, a boom echoed out, and the ground quaked. An enraged roar could be heard, along with a bloodcurdling scream. The source of the commotion was a group from one of the Three Sects and Six Churches, the Church of the Blood Orchid. Only moments before, Meng Hao had suddenly appeared and attacked them. He didn't kill anyone, but did beat them to a pulp until they were seriously injured, and then took their bags of holding.

Even as he made to leave, he scanned the bags of holding belonging to the Chosen of the Church of the Blood Orchid, after which his fury raged.

The bags of holding weren't all empty, but were definitely much lighter than they should have been. It was almost as if someone had looted them at some point earlier in time!

"Dammit!" cried Meng Hao. He turned and thrashed the Church of the Blood Orchid disciples a bit more. Their Dao Protectors were enraged to the point of insanity, but with their cultivation bases sealed, all they could do was endure.

As for the Chosen, they were forced to write promissory notes. The hatred they felt for Meng Hao was now completely beyond description.

"These South Heaven people are all bandits and thieves!" said one of the Chosen from the Church of the Blood Orchid, a young woman who appeared to be on the verge of bursting into tears.

"Don't worry," Meng Hao said grimly. "I'll help you get your revenge. Who the hell dares to steal my business?!"

Six hours later, in another part of the mountain range, the ripples of magical techniques spread out in all directions from a group from one of the Five Holy Lands, the Blue Lotus Sky.

Their fate was the same as the Church of the Blood Orchid. Meng Hao was invincible, booms rang out, and serious injuries were inflicted. Afterwards, Meng Hao took their bags of holding, and was happy to find that they were much fuller than the last group, and had not been ransacked before.

In the following several days, Meng Hao roamed about, occasionally killing people, but mostly just inflicting injuries. Despite that, widespread indignation and discontent rose up among the various power groups. Many opted to just leave, and when they finally reached the starry sky outside Planet South Heaven, they breathed sighs of relief. The Dao Protectors' cultivation bases were restored, and they hated Meng Hao down to their bones. However, they were incapable of setting foot back on the planet, and had no choice but to stamp their feet angrily and leave.

This was... an evacuation....

Meng Hao had single-handedly stood up to all the Chosen and Dao Protectors of the various sects and clans of the Ninth Sea. Now, the mountains were being evacuated. The fate of anyone he ran into was to be picked clean after failing to escape.

When he came across empty bags of holding, he would often make their owners write promissory notes. Anyone who didn't cooperate suffered the same fate as Sun Hai, and were dragged around by the hair.

More and more sects and clans chose to leave. Even Mount Sun and the Li Clan eventually lost their courage and had no choice but to depart. Sticking around was simply a source of too much pain for them.

Though the Dao Protectors had higher cultivation bases than him, those cultivation bases were sealed. The fact that Meng Hao, a member of the junior generation, had defeated them, was driving them mad.

A few days later, Meng Hao spent an entire day searching without finding anyone left behind in the mountain range. After some thought, he

came to the conclusion that everyone had left. However, it was at this point that suddenly, he stopped in place and turned to look off in the distance. Because of the level of his cultivation base, he was just barely able to make out some faint ripples.

"There's still someone who hasn't left?" he thought, surprised. During the past few days, he'd been methodically attempting to force a complete evacuation, and had assumed that everyone had already chosen to leave. Unexpectedly, he now found that there were still people remaining.

He disappeared in a flash as he shot off into the distance. Soon, he caught sight of a group of four people who were traveling along at maximum speed. One of them was Fang Xiangshan. Next to her were two old women, apparently her Dao Protectors, and finally, an old man, who was presumably one of Fang Yunyi's Dao Protectors.

As Meng Hao neared, the faces of these four Fang Clan members flickered. The two old women stepped forward and glared at Meng Hao. As for Fang Xiangshan, hatred flickered in her eyes as she looked at Meng Hao.

"Everyone else has gone," he said suddenly. "Why haven't you people?"

In response to his words, Fang Xiangshan's face flickered suspiciously, and she rushed out from behind her two Dao Protectors to charge toward Meng Hao.

The old man quickly grabbed Fang Xiangshan's arm.

"Young Lady, let's get out of here!"

The other two Dao Protectors, the old women, transformed into beams of light that shot toward Meng Hao.

"Go find your clan uncle Fang Xiufeng! Then you'll be safe! Get out of here!"

They had been advancing with extreme caution, and were obviously scared of attracting Meng Hao's attention. However, now that Meng Hao was here, there was no need to try to remain hidden, so they sped forward as fast as they could.

When Meng Hao heard the words “Fang Xiufeng”, he couldn’t hold back from coughing lightly. He was just about to say something when the two old women let out shrill shrieks, and then attacked viciously. A cloud of poison spread out, within which were two skeletons that radiated mysterious light. As they passed through the air, the vegetation beneath them withered up and died.

Meng Hao frowned, then punched out with his right hand. The Mountain Consuming Incantation caused a mountain range to materialize, which swept out to crush down onto the two old women.

Rumbling could be heard as the two old women attacked with all the power they could muster. False Immortal cultivation base power exploded out as they attempted to block Meng Hao.

Meng Hao snorted coldly, then waved his hand, causing his Dharma Idol to appear, whose fist slammed into the ground, causing everything to quake and fissures to appear on the surface of the land. The Blood Demon Grand Magic appeared, and instead of chasing after Fang Xiangshan, he continued to battle with the two old women.

After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, booms filled the air and the old women coughed up blood. Their bodies were severely withered as they were tossed down to the ground, where they stared at Meng Hao with venomous hatred.

“You’re dead!”

“We’re in the lands of South Heaven, and a powerful expert of the Fang Clan is stationed here! Now that you’ve dared to treat us this way, you’re going to die beyond the shadow of a doubt!”

“I wasn’t planning to kill you, so stop tempting me,” Meng Hao said coldly.

With that, he turned and shot off in pursuit of Fang Xiangshan. He couldn’t shake the feeling that there was something fishy going on with her. By now, everyone had left South Heaven, but she was still here. Most important of all was her reaction to his words just now.

“Could it be that there’s still some good fortune left to be had in this place?” he thought curiously. Even as he sped through the air, the two old women’s faces flickered. Gritting their teeth, they flew after him in pursuit.

Meanwhile, nine enormous teleportation portals had opened up in the starry sky outside of Planet South Heaven. Glittering light spread out in all directions as more than a dozen figures appeared in the nine huge teleportation portals.

The figures were blurry, and were obviously not true selves, but rather divine will clones. Despite being nothing but divine will, for them to appear here caused ripples to spread out through the starry sky, and immense pressure to bear down on Planet South Heaven.

The figures all began to speak at almost exactly the same time.

“Fellow Daoist Fang, we can forget about what happened in the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple.... However, I only hope that you can return Ji Yin of the Ji Clan to us. Fellow Daoist Fang, please show some charity....”

“Elder Brother Fang, a Chosen of Mount Sun was also captured.... Please, allow him to be released!”

“The Li Clan has a good relationship with the Fang Clan. How could Li Ling’er of the junior generation possibly have been taken captive here...? She’s a young woman, and if her purity has been compromised, the Li Clan can tolerate it. However, don’t forget, Fang Xiufeng, Li Ling’er is the future fiancée that links our clans!”

“Elder Brother Fang, my eldest son Song Luodan was also taken captive. We became friends as soon as we met way back when, Elder Brother Fang. Look what’s happened now....”

“Elder Brother Fang, you’re close friends with the Pontifex of the Church of the Immortal Emperor. Ai... the Pontifex is sealed in critical meditation and can’t come out. So... could you give us some face? Sun Hai is one of my own descendants.”

"Big bro Fang... the Patriarch is somewhat at a loss considering what happened, and asked me to come talk with you.... Uh... my son, your nephew, Fang Yunyi was also taken captive...."

As the voices echoed about in the Great Tang of the Eastern Lands, Shui Dongliu shook his head and smiled, then vanished. Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li also chuckled bitterly. After the restrictive spells had been removed from the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple, they had seen and heard everything that had occurred.

"That rascal, he's too...." Fang Xiufeng sighed, and couldn't help but feel that he was, indeed, somewhat in the wrong. Had the people outside of South Heaven been rude and abusive, then the situation would have been easier to deal with. However, they were very calm and polite, and they were correct to point out the relationships that existed. As a result, Fang Xiufeng felt a bit embarrassed.

His wife, Meng Hao's mother, was actually beaming with joy and was clearly very pleased.

They exchanged a look. Then, Fang Xiufeng muttered and then waved his hand toward the sky. Everything trembled, and an enormous rift appeared. More than ten figures immediately flew down from up above.

Even though they were still blurry, their appearance caused all of Planet South Heaven to tremble from the incredible pressure that spread out. However, this was Planet South Heaven, and they still needed to act cautiously.

They clasped hands in greeting to Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li, and in response, Fang Xiufeng smiled wryly.

"Fellow Daoists, this matter... oh, never mind. I'll take you to the scene to make sure the members of your junior generation are all safe."

These people were being polite because they had no desire whatsoever to offend Fang Xiufeng. In response to his words, the group transformed into prismatic beams that shot toward the mountainous location of the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple.

# Chapter 831: The Grownups Arrive....

All of the cultivators of the Eastern Lands could see the enormous rift up in the sky, including Meng Hao, who was currently in hot pursuit of Fang Xiangshan. Suddenly, his heart began to thump, and he actually began to feel a bit guilty.

However, his eyes quickly grew calm and unperturbed, and he continued his pursuit.

Fang Xiangshan was up ahead. The old Dao Protector continued to grasp her by the arm as he unleashed the fastest speed he was capable of. He even used secret magical arts and blood evasion techniques. Because this was already near the border region of the mountain range, before long they were able to charge out from within the mountains. They transformed into prismatic beams and shot toward the Fang Clan's fortress in the Great Tang of the Eastern Lands.

At the same time, the two old women were anxiously pursuing Meng Hao, their hearts filled with venomous hatred.

"Once we find your clan uncle, all of this will be resolved," the old man said, "and that Meng Hao will be dead for sure!" Fang Xiangshan bit her lower lip and nodded. She was inwardly alarmed, but was also certain that, based on her status in the Fang Clan, the clan uncle would definitely resolve the crisis. Furthermore, he would most certainly make Meng Hao pay the price for what he had done.

She believed this, the old man believed it, and the two venomous old women behind Meng Hao also believed it.

"My clan uncle is stationed here on Planet South Heaven, so if anyone dares to harm the interests of the Fang clan, he'll definitely do something to stop it!"

"Your clan uncle might have imposed restrictions on the people entering Planet South Heaven, but he's still a member of the Fang Clan. This Meng Hao is malicious to the extreme, so he'll definitely be killed!"

“All we have to do is lay eyes on the clan uncle, and Meng Hao will be dead! No matter how deep the resources of Meng Hao’s sect here on South Heaven are, nothing will be able to save him!”

There were two people up front, Meng Hao in the middle, and two old women following from behind. Five people whistled through the air, eventually charging out of the mountain range. It was at this point that Meng Hao extended his right hand and made a grasping motion. Rumbling filled the air as he snatched at the old man flying next to Fang Xiangshan. The old man’s body trembled, and he coughed up a mouthful of blood as he evaded Meng Hao’s attack. A rancorous look filled his face as he began to speed away once again.

The two old women behind Meng Hao anxiously sent forth attacks, filling the air with rumbling sounds.

“Don’t push things too far, Meng Hao! This might be Planet South Heaven, but even so, this area is the Fang Clan’s jurisdiction!”

“You’re going to die today!”

Meng Hao gave a cold harrumph, and prepared to attack again. He had no intention of killing anyone, of course; he just wanted to rummage through Fang Xiangshan’s bag of holding. However, it was at this point that over a dozen beams of light approached from off in the distance, moving with indescribable speed.

In the lead were Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li. Behind them were the more than ten powerful experts from various outside sects and clans.

When Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li caught sight of Meng Hao, Fang Xiufeng glared at him. As for Meng Hao’s mother, she seemed to have a somber expression on the surface, but a smile could be seen in her eyes.

When Meng Hao saw them, the guilt he felt grew. As for the old man next to Fang Xiangshan, when he saw the approaching newcomers, his face lit up with joy.

The two old women very nearly started laughing.

“Clan uncle, save me!” cried Fang Xiangshan. The old man couldn’t

contain his excitement, and quickly clasped hands in greeting to Fang Xiufeng.

“Greetings, your excellency Fang!”

The two old women immediately stopped in place, joy bubbling up in their hearts. They quickly circled out to seal Meng Hao’s paths of retreat. Their faces flickered with killing intent; to them, Meng Hao was already as good as dead.

After this, they clasped hands and bowed to Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li.

“Greetings, your excellency Fang!”

Meng Hao slowed down and came to a stop, after which he stood there rubbing his nose.

In the blink of an eye, Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li were already descending through midair. Behind them, the more than ten powerful experts could be seen, blurry and unclear, but radiating intense power and pressure that caused even the sky to grow dim.

As soon as their gazes fell onto Meng Hao, it was as if multiple mountains were crushing down around him, sealing him in place completely.

“Clan uncle, it’s me, Shan’er!” cried Fang Xiangshan excitedly. “Clan uncle, please back me up here!” Now that she had caught sight of her two relatives, she found it impossible to hold back from giving vent to the humiliations she had just endured.

It was at this point that the old man and the two old women glanced over at Meng Hao. Looking pleased, and eyes brimming with hatred, they began to talk as if they were speaking of a dead person.

“Your excellency Fang, this is Meng Hao. He has a sinister and vicious heart, and is unmatchably shameless! He even used despicable methods to capture Yunyi!”

“You can’t leave this guy alive! Not only did he capture Yunyi, he also humiliated Goddess Fan Dong’er from the Ninth Sea God World! Plus, he

captured Chosen from the other sects and clans! He's contemptible to the maximum!"

"Yeah, that's right! Even more excessive was that he used disgraceful tactics to steal all the good fortune of the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple for himself! The thought of it makes your hair stand up in anger!"

"This guy is rotten to the core! Not only did he plant landmines outside of the Daoist rite temple, which caused injury to everyone, but after that, he posed as a Dao Protector outside the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple! He even called himself the groundskeeper!"

"He has absolutely, positively no sense of shame! He occupied the entire Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple by himself, and didn't let anyone else inside, and then, used disgraceful techniques to extort and rob the rest of us! There were many fellow cultivators who were injured by him!"

Tears were now streaming down Fang Xiangshan's face as she looked over at Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li and bowed continuously.

"Uncle, aunt. This guy chased me down and was trying to kill me! If I hadn't run into the two of you, Shan'er would definitely have been buried in this place, and I would never have been able to see you again." Fang Xiangshan was not a direct bloodline descendant of the Fang Clan, so she could only use an informal version of the address "uncle." If she were a direct bloodline descendant, then she would have called him "Uncle Fang Xiufeng," and used a more formal version of the word "Uncle." After all, when it came to the direct bloodline of the Fang Clan, Fang Xiufeng counted as the eldest son, and Meng Hao as the eldest grandson.

When Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li heard the words being spoken, their faces darkened. Meng Hao felt even more guilty, and a bashful, seemingly apologetic, smile appeared on his face.

The ten or more people behind Fang Xiufeng then began to laugh coldly as they looked at Meng Hao.

"So, you're Meng Hao of the junior generation!"

"How daring, Meng Hao. You still haven't released the Chosen of our

Mount Sun? You'll be coming back to Mount Sun with me to atone for your crime!"

"You have Chosen Ling'er of the Li Clan. To pay for this crime, you must immediately drop to your knees, cripple your cultivate base, and dig out your eyes!"

"Song Luodan is a Chosen of the Song Clan! He is honest and upright, and has an extraordinary cultivation base. What underhanded tricks did you use to capture him!?"

"You have Sun Hai and still haven't let him go? You're obviously young and ignorant, so I'll take your father and mother's place to offer you some discipline!"

If Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li weren't here, any one of this group of people could have cut Meng Hao down where he stood. Instead, they just spoke cold words that made everything feel as frigid as ice.

Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li's faces were equally icy.

When Fang Xiangshan saw all of the people standing behind Fang Xiufeng, her heart swelled with joy, and she instantly gave Meng Hao a spiteful look and said, "Uncle, aunt, this guy even has the Immortal Ancient Daoist Medallion!"

"Ladies and gentlemen," said the old man from the Fang Clan. "Your excellency Fang. This young man not only has the Immortal Ancient Daoist Medallion, he also has a bronze lamp. That lamp gives him eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal!"

When the other people heard this, they stared at Meng Hao, who lowered his head with a bashful smile, like a little child who had just been caught with his hand in the cookie jar.

Fang Xiufeng turned his head to look at Meng Hao.

"Is what they said true!?" he said.

Meng Hao blinked for a moment, then quietly said, "It's not as incredible as they make it sound.... I didn't do it on purpose!"

Fang Xiangshan and the others didn't notice anything unusual about the way Fang Xiufeng and Meng Hao were speaking to each other. However, among the group of ten or more powerful experts, there were a few who felt their hearts quiver. All of a sudden, something didn't seem right.

Fang Xiufeng gave a cold snort and flicked his sleeve. Immediately, the pressure weighing down on Meng Hao vanished. Although the motion appeared casual, when the onlookers saw it happen, their hearts were shaken.

The expert from the Church of the Immortal Emperor narrowed his eyes. "It almost seems... like there's some fishy connection between Fang Xiufeng and this kid...."

The representative from the Ji Clan looked over at Meng Hao, eyes glittering, then looked back thoughtfully at Fang Xiufeng.

Fang Xiufeng frowned and looked at Meng Hao, a serious look in his eyes.

"Why haven't you let those people go already?" he asked.

Meng Hao cleared his throat. He looked hesitantly at his mother, then back at his father, who was obviously putting on a forced and phony demeanor. Finally, he sighed and patted his bag of holding.

Sun Hai came out first.

His clothes were in ribbons, and his expression haggard. However, as soon as he appeared, he immediately clasped hands to Meng Hao and fawningly said, "Elder Brother Meng, 'Lil Hai pays his respects, sir....'" He was about to continue when he suddenly noticed everyone else in the area. He gasped, and then began to tremble excitedly.

The expert from the Church of the Immortal Emperor had an unsightly expression on his face. He shot a ruthless look in Sun Hai's direction, clearly displeased with the face-losing words he had just uttered.

Sun Hai's heart trembled, and yet, he couldn't hold back his excitement. Tears immediately began to flow down his face.

“Uncle!” he cried out loudly, using the respectful form of address. “Save me, Uncle! He forced me to do it! You have no idea how brutal this shameless bastard is! He took my bag of holding and stole all of my belongings, then he forced me to write a promissory note!

“I didn’t want to, but he dragged me around by the hair and did everything he could to hurt me. Look, I don’t even have any clothes anymore, just rags. He forced me to do everything!” From the tone of Sun Hai’s words as they echoed out, everyone could sense what a miserable and terrible experience he had gone through.

Meng Hao stared coldly at Sun Hai, his eyes wide. He said nothing.

“Hey, what are you looking at, you little punk!” cried Sun Hai, his eyes widening threateningly. “You’re dead!” However, at the same time, he backed up quickly to stand next to his Uncle. Once he was there, he heaved a sigh of relief as he stared at Meng Hao.

Fang Xiufeng watched all of this with wide eyes and slack jaw. Meng Li blinked a few times, and looked over at Meng Hao, a grin in her eyes.

“Release the other ones, too,” said Fang Xiufeng. He looked like he might be getting a headache.

“Oh, right.” replied Meng Hao, then slapped his bag of holding to produce Taiyang Zi.

Taiyang Zi looked miserable; his hair was disheveled, and he looked completely tattered. His eyes even looked blank, and he stood there in a daze for a moment before beginning to tremble with excitement.

“Master Uncle....” he said, his voice quavering with emotion from finally being able to see the light of day, as if he suddenly had seen a gleam of hope in his life again. Then, he sped over to stand next to the powerful expert from Mount Sun. Finally, he turned to look hatefully at Meng Hao.

“Meng Hao, I hope that you DON’T die here today! That way, one day I’ll have the chance to slaughter you myself! I hereby swear that I will help you to understand what it means to live a life worse than death!”

Meng Hao glared back viciously at Taiyang Zi.

"I dare you to say one more word!" said Meng Hao, his eyes burning with murderous intent. Taiyang Zi was just about to open his mouth when he saw the look in Meng Hao's eyes, and suddenly, his heart began to tremble, and he didn't dare to speak another word.

# Chapter 832: Everyone Is Released

“What incredible gall!” said the old man next to Fang Xiangshan. He snorted coldly and glared at Meng Hao. Clearly... he hadn’t yet picked up on any of the clues. By this time, however, of the more than ten people behind Fang Xiufeng, most had realized that the mood in the area... was off.

From the way Fang Xiufeng and Meng Hao talked to each other, it didn’t seem that they were strangers. In fact, it was more like the way a father and son would talk to each other.

Light gasps could be heard. By following such a path of reasoning, they quickly called to mind the reason that Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li had come to Planet South Heaven in the first place. Then, they looked at Meng Hao again, but in a different way than they had before.

“Stop stalling! Release them all!” said Fang Xiufeng. Inwardly, he was chuckling wryly, but also felt a touch of pride. After all, Meng Hao had accomplished something that few others could.

With a long face and somewhat of a pout, Meng Hao released Fang Yunyi and Song Luodan. They appeared, looking distressingly haggard. Fang Yunyi’s injuries seemed especially serious, and he coughed up some blood and then immediately fainted. The old man standing next to Fang Xiangshan immediately stepped forward to catch him, then looked back at Meng Hao, killing intent swirling in his eyes.

Song Luodan was taciturn as he walked off. He turned his head and gave a meaningful glare at Meng Hao, but didn’t say anything. When he reached the powerful expert from the Song Clan, he stood there with his eyes closed. It was impossible to tell what he was thinking.

“Any more?” asked Fang Xiufeng.

“Uh... a few,” Meng Hao replied. He reluctantly released three more people from his bag of holding. These were three other Chosen he had captured in the past few days. As soon as they were released, they turned to look at Meng Hao with fury burning in their eyes, as well as the desire

to kill.

When they saw that three additional Chosen had been tucked away in Meng Hao's bag of holding, everyone gaped, even Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li. No one could have imagined that Meng Hao would be able to snatch up so many people. This was especially true of the powerful experts from the outside sects and clans.

They stared blankly at the people emerging from Meng Hao's bag of holding, and couldn't help but think that Meng Hao... truly was terrifying.

"Alright, that's it," Meng Hao said, spreading his hands wide and looking calmly at the powerful experts standing behind his father and mother.

In response to his words, the powerful experts from the Ji and Li clans glared back with wide eyes. Fang Xiufeng let out a cold snort.

"What about the Chosen from the Ji Clan, and Li Ling'er!"

Meng Hao suddenly looked a bit startled.

"Li Ling'er? Who? Uh, I don't know her. Ji Clan Chosen? I never saw any Ji Clan Chosen!" As Meng Hao rambled on, Fang Xiufeng looked back at him with a deadpan expression, and finally sighed.

"I need to get off of Planet South Heaven," Meng Hao thought to himself. "It so boring being held back here." Finally, he decided to pull Ji Yin out of his bag of holding.

As soon as Ji Yin emerged, a thick mist appeared around her body, concealing her completely. Finally she looked back at Meng Hao, a profound expression on her face. Then she turned and began to walk over to the powerful expert from the Ji Clan.

"Don't forget that you owe me a promissory note!" blurted Meng Hao. He had long since recovered his second true self, and had also cleaned out Ji Yin's bag of holding.

Ji Yin's pace faltered briefly, as if she was having to exert intense control over herself. After a long moment passed, she gritted her teeth and continued walking.

“Okay, that was really the last one!” said Meng Hao resolutely.

The more than ten people behind Fang Xiufeng stood there silently. If there were any of them who hadn’t yet figured out what was going on by now, then they didn’t deserve to have practiced cultivation to the level that they had. The expert from the Li Clan sighed, and apparently felt a headache coming on. In the agreement between the Li Clan and the Fang Clan all those years ago, Li Ling’er was supposed to be engaged to Fang Xiufeng’s crippled son.

From the look of things, she could tell... that the crippled son from all those years ago was actually none other than the Meng Hao they were facing right now.

The Li Clan expert sighed and looked at Fang Xiufeng. “Elder Brother Fang... look....”

Fang Xiufeng smiled wryly then turned to glare at Meng Hao.

“Release her!”

Meng Hao set his jaw, took a step forward and glared at Fang Xiufeng. “She’s supposed to be a maidservant for mom!”

His wording was quite barbaric, but it actually softened Fang Xiufeng’s heart. He knew that from the time Meng Hao was very young, he and Meng Li had been unable to be there for him, and he would surely react negatively to being restrained and instructed.

Meng Li covered her smile with her hand, then took a few steps forward and looked at her son. Her tone gentle, she said, “Take her out and let me see.”

Meng Hao slapped his bag of holding, and Li Ling’er flew out, her hair a mess and her lips still smeared with blood. Her buttocks were still slightly uneven and still had a deep impression of a handprint on them, and her face was pale. She appeared to be in such pain that she was on the verge of passing out.

As soon as she appeared, a vicious look gleamed in her eyes, and she spun toward Meng Hao. Her hands twisted into claws that slashed toward

Meng Hao's face. Meng Hao glared at her and extended his right hand.

Li Ling'er's heart trembled, and she instantly fell back, glaring angrily at Meng Hao.

"Someone as savage as you isn't suitable to be my mom's maidservant. BEAT IT!" Meng Hao waved his hand dismissively. He was in a foul mood now considering how much he had just lost out on.

"Meng Hao!" screeched Li Ling'er, so furious that she trembled. She was just about to charge forward and attack again when the Li Clan expert held out a hand to block her way. She pulled her off to the side and transmitted a few words to her. Li Ling'ers eyes went wide, and she stared at Meng Hao, then looked over at Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li. Suddenly, her face went completely ashen, as if her entire world had gone dark.

"Impossible...." she murmured, almost as if she had been possessed. "It's impossible...."

"Hmph. Fine, that's everybody," said Meng Hao. "If there's nothing else then I'll be leaving now." He swished his sleeve and was about to leave when the old man from the Fang Clan, who still hadn't picked up on what was going on, suddenly laughed coldly.

"You want to leave? Hand over your bag of holding, then get on your knees and beg for mercy!" His body flashed as he shot toward Meng Hao. As for the two old women, they hesitated for a moment. Something seemed off to them, but in the end, they gritted their teeth and charged toward Meng Hao.

Fang Xiangshan had not practiced cultivation for a very long time, but even she could tell that something was off, although she wasn't quite sure what.

Seeing the three people closing in on him, Meng Hao's face immediately darkened.

"Who the hell do you people think you are!?" His right hand clenched into a fist and he immediately punched out. A boom rang out as the three old Dao Protectors' bodies were shaken. They fell back, and were just

about to unseal their cultivation bases when....

Suddenly, another cold snort echoed out, and Fang Xiufeng's voice reverberated through the air.

"WHO THE HELL DO YOU PEOPLE THINK YOU ARE!?" An icy light flickered out from his eyes. It was nothing more than a gaze, but it caused the three old Dao Protectors to tumble backward and cough up mouthful after mouthful of blood. Rumbling filled their bodies as numerous sword wounds appeared on them; they appeared to be on the verge of being sliced to pieces.

The three old Dao Protectors' faces fell as ninety percent of their cultivation bases were slashed away. Blood spurted about everywhere, and they were very nearly killed.

"Your excellency Fang...."

Off to the side, Fang Xiangshan gaped. "Clan uncle...."

"Ladies and gentlemen, Fellow Daoists," said Fang Xiufeng, a slight smile on his lips. "I still haven't been able to make the proper introductions. This... is my young son." When his voice echoed out into the ears of the powerful experts, they began to smile wryly. Earlier, they had for the most part figured things, so to hear Fang Xiufeng personally speak the words came as no surprise.

However, Ji Yin and all the others looked over at Meng Hao in complete shock. Li Ling'er was trembling, and her expression was blank. However, the most terrified of them all wasn't her, but Sun Hai. He watched blankly as the scene played out, and thought back to everything he had said earlier. Immediately, a gloomy expression could be seen on his face, as if his whole world had gone dark.

By this point, Fang Yunyi had regained consciousness. He and Fang Xiangshan stood there with minds abuzz and hearts filled with explosive thunder. The old man and the two old women gasped in disbelief.

They thought about all the threatening things they had said to Meng Hao... how they had tried to use a son's own father to threaten him.

Then... they began to shake in their boots.

"I unsealed the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple on South Heaven to provide my young son with a training ground. From a young age, he has lived a rough, unrestrained life. For the sake of my face, I hope all of you Fellow Daoists will not be too offended by any of his faux pas." Laughing, Fang Xiufeng clasped hands to all the surrounding cultivators.

The more than ten powerful experts chuckled wryly and shook their heads. They then exchanged some polite words with Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li, at the same time glancing over at Meng Hao occasionally. As for the bags of holding he had snatched, and all the other things that had occurred in the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple, it was a bit inappropriate to bring them up anymore.

"Since all of you are here," said Fang Xiufeng, "don't be in a hurry to leave. Please, come back with me to my clan headquarters and allow me to entertain you." The more than ten experts laughed to themselves. The matters of the junior generation were things they could afford to ignore. Therefore, they laughed and chatted as they followed Fang Xiufeng to the Fang Clan.

As for Song Luodan and all the other Chosen, they hated Meng Hao just as much as before, and he them. They did nothing to conceal this fact, and neither did Meng Hao. He glared back at them hatefully, then pulled out a thick stack of promissory notes, which he then began to leaf through. Song Luodan and the others had no choice but to grit their teeth and turn to follow the members of the senior generation.

Meng Hao decided not to go back home to the Fang Clan, nor did Fang Xiufeng attempt to force him to. Meng Hao's mother straightened his garments and then pinched his nose. Then, in much the manner one would speak to a young child, she warned him not to get into any trouble. Finally, she turned and left.

Fang Yunyi and Fang Xiangshan were scared witless, and were just about to follow their seniors when Meng Hao stepped forward and blocked their way.

“C-cousin....” Fang Xiangshan stammered.

Fang Yunyi snorted coldly and looked away, refusing to speak.

Meng Hao glared at him, then suddenly reached out and smacked him across the side of the face. Blood sprayed from Fang Yunyi’s mouth, and he was sent tumbling onto the ground. His Dao Protector stood off to the side, head bowed, smiling bitterly, pretending like he didn’t see what was happening.

“You!” said Fang Yunyi, looking up at Meng Hao. However, in the instant that the word was out of his mouth, Meng Hao’s foot slammed down onto the sprawling Fang Yunyi.

“You refuse to address me as brother when you see me!? What kind of upbringing did you have!” Meng Hao viciously kicked him a few more times, and Fang Yunyi screamed. His head was now covered with blood, causing Fang Xiangshan to be frozen in fear as she looked on. Meng Hao’s viciousness now caused her to remember some scenes from when she was young. If she recalled correctly, she had actually been bullied by this older cousin of hers on a few occasions.

“AAAHHHHH! I’m gonna kill you!” roared Fang Yunyi.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered coldly, and he punched out again, landing a blow directly onto Fang Yunyi’s mouth, shattering his teeth and making it impossible for him to speak. Blood spurted out.

By now, Fang Xiangshan was trembling violently. The old man and the two old women were staring in shock, and yet didn’t dare to interfere.

Fang Yunyi was being beaten senseless. His body was wracked with pain, and he was on the verge of losing consciousness. Memories from his childhood floated up, and he vaguely remembered being beaten up by a certain brother and sister team.

Miserable shrieks rang out as Meng Hao kicked him again. It seemed that if Fang Yunyi didn’t speak up and say the right words, he would be trampled to death.

Filled with fear, Fang Yunyi spit out a mouthful of blood and then

blurted, “C-cousin!”

Meng Hao’s foot stopped in midair above Fang Yunyi’s face. He slowly pulled his foot back, and then a bashful smile appeared on his face.

“Little bro, welcome to Planet South Heaven.”

# Chapter 833: An Amateurish Seduction

## Con

Meng Hao turned to look at Fang Xiangshan, and in that instant, she produced a dilapidated bottle from her bag of holding.

“Cousin, this is something I found in the mountain range, it has the music of a Dao inside....”

Her heart stabbed with pain, but considering the fate of Fang Yunyi that she had just witnessed, she didn’t dare to do anything other than hand over the bottle. This was especially true considering everything she had said in front of Meng Hao’s parents. When she thought about that, her scalp went numb.

Likewise, how could Meng Hao forget all of the venomous things she had said just moments ago? He reached out and took the bottle, looked at it, then threw it back to Fang Xiangshan. The bottle was not unfamiliar to him; there had been many like it inside the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple.

Although it had the music of a Dao inside, that was simply because it had existed inside the temple for so long.

Ignoring Fang Xiangshan, Meng Hao turned and transformed into a beam of light that shot off into the distance. When he finally disappeared, the three old Dao Protectors sighed and helped the injured Fang Yunyi to his feet, then took him and terrified Fang Xiangshan off into the distance.

Several days passed by in a flash. During that time, Meng Hao traveled around in the Eastern Lands, mostly in the area surrounding the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple mountains. He didn’t reveal his appearance or aura, but instead concealed it with the bamboo hat.

As for clothing, he pulled out a long robe that had belonged to Sun Hai from the Church of the Immortal Emperor. He roamed through the area slowly, waiting.

Waiting... for those two damned bandits!

"How dare they steal business from me!" he thought, his expression dark. Meng Hao had long since been brooding about the two mysterious bandits who had stolen all the items that belonged to him.

"Unless I'm mistaken, I know exactly which bastards pulled such a shameless stunt!" He snorted coldly as he flew through midair.

"Those two bastards fled during my battle with the 10th Wang Clan Patriarch, and haven't dared to show their faces since then. This time, I'll definitely track them down!" For some reason, Meng Hao was certain that there was no one other than the meat jelly and the parrot who could have accomplished something that caused him to lose out on so much.

"Although, those two little bastards aren't that strong. How could they have managed to rob so many Chosen?" Meng Hao was very curious about this, and it was the one thing he couldn't figure out.

"Did they come across some sort of good fortune?" he thought suspiciously. He continued to fly through midair in the region near the mountain range. Three days passed, until finally, he ran into one of the Eastern Lands' walled cities. He glanced at it, then slowly and deliberately flew around in the city a few times before finally making his way off into the distance.

What he didn't notice was that in one of the city's inns, two pairs of eyes were surreptitiously peering out at him.

Two burly fellows, tall and sturdy, were at a table slurping alcohol and chomping down on meat. One of them sat cross-legged in a chair, the other squatted down next to the table. Apparently, those were the only positions that were comfortable to these two.

Even stranger, the burly fellow who sat there cross-legged would drink the alcohol in huge slurps, and would toss enormous quantities of food into his mouth with each bite. As for the other man, he... pecked at his food almost like a bird would.

"Did you see that?" said the bird-like man. He blinked, and then a wily gleam appeared in his eyes as he watched Meng Hao disappear off into the distance.

"Huh?" said the other man, looking up to stare at Meng Hao's retreating figure.

"You idiot!" said the bird-like man, smacking the other man hard across the head. "Fool! Get a brain, would you!! Lord Fifth has hauled you around for so many years now! How could you still be so stupid?!?!"

"What the hell?!" roared the big man, food spraying from his mouth, revealing dancing electricity inside. "You're being immoral! You're being shameless! This isn't right! I'm gonna convert you!!"

"Quiet down," said the bird-like man self-assuredly. "Listen to me, did you see that guy with the bamboo hat? He was hiding his aura. That hat is definitely some kind of treasure!"

"Treasure?!" said the big man, his eyes lighting up.

"Right. Definitely a treasure. Based on my experience, people who carry treasures like that are usually weaklings. They're basically lambs waiting for the slaughter!"

"Have faith in the Lord Fifth; that guy is definitely an easy mark! Furthermore, his cultivation base probably isn't very high, but his bag of holding is probably very deep. Did you see his clothes? Not too long ago, we robbed a guy who was wearing clothes exactly like that."

"Most important of all, he clearly doesn't want people to recognize him. That indicates he has secrets! Secrets, I tell you!" The bird-like man was continuing to get more and more excited.

"Secrets!" exclaimed the big man, his eyes glowing brightly.

"With secrets like that, and a weak cultivation base, plus a plump bag of holding... he's definitely ripe for the plucking. Besides, a single look, and you can tell he's the kind of person who knows how to dress well. He's the perfect mark for us. Trust me, if we can clean him out, then we'll be able to live in complete comfort." The bird-like man was even more excited than before.

The big man's eyes gleamed brightly, but then he hesitated.

"But we failed so many other times, and even almost got captured. Especially in the past few days. Whenever you take on HIS appearance, we end up getting chased by everyone.... Wait, is he a bully?"

"You got it!" said the bird-like man, nodding. "Of course he's a bully. He couldn't be anything else! Look, we'll definitely succeed this time, just have faith in the Lord Fifth. All the other times were mere mishaps. Those Chosen have all left, so the only people left behind have got to be easy marks."

"Straighten him out!" said the big man, clenching his jaw and nodding his head. "Fudge, Lord Third is gonna set him straight!"

"Hold on, let Lord Fifth plan this out. A person like that, hmm... there's an eighty to ninety percent chance that he's a ladies man. Okay, we can't use the same tactic that we used before. This time, we'll directly implement plan #9. Quickly, transform into a hot babe."

"#9? Which one is nine? How dare you ridicule Lord Third!!" the big man raged.

"Uh... #3! Plan #3!!" replied the bird-like man.

"Well why didn't you say so earlier? Alright, who should I look like?"

"Anybody, it doesn't matter, as long as she's hot and seductive. Come, hurry up, we need to go!"

"Hot and seductive?" The big man thought for a moment, and then a popping sound rang out as he changed form. Now he was a woman, extremely curvaceous and completely alluring, with a beautiful, entrancing face, and eyes that tugged at the heart and soul.

If Meng Hao were here, he would instantly recognize that this was... Demoness Zhixiang.

"Too many clothes!" said the bird-like man. "Come on, less clothes!"  
Pop!

The big man changed again.

"Now you're way too revealing! Y-y-you, you idiot! How could you even

go outside looking like that!?"

After seven or eight adjustments, the bird-like man was satisfied and prodded the other man out the door.

The big man in Zhixiang form wore extremely revealing clothes, and felt completely resentful because of it. Consequently, he started picking his nose and making big, manly strides as they walked down the road, causing the bird-like man to fly into a rage. More adjustments were made.

Meng Hao had just left the city. Beneath the bamboo hat, he was frowning. After traveling around the area near the mountain range for all these days, he still hadn't run into the two bastards he was looking for.

"Could they have left?" he thought. "Or maybe they detected my aura?" Suddenly, his face flickered, and he spun around. There, in midair not too far off, a woman was approaching him. An anxious expression could be seen on her face, as if she were being pursued.

The instant the woman appeared, Meng Hao's jaw dropped in astonishment.

This woman was none other than Zhixiang, which was of course the big man in disguise.

She wore revealing clothing, and smelled like a spring breeze. She possessed an alluring charm and grace, and had a flirtatious look in her eyes, eyes that seemed capable of enchanting anyone who looked into them. Most people who laid eyes on her would instantly find their hearts pounding.

As she passed Meng Hao, she looked over and smiled shyly. Then she made to hurry off. However, before she could get very far, she turned and looked back at him, apparently having been attracted to him in some way. She gave him an entrancing, tantalizing look, then turned and walked off, her curves undulating gently. The sight of her slender figure from behind was enough to cause any man who saw her to palpitate with eagerness.

Meng Hao gaped.

'Zhixiang' was not happy at all, and was inwardly muttering about how

obvious things had been made, and yet the mark didn't respond at all. Instead, he just stared with a slack jaw. Finally, 'Zhixiang' intentionally spit out a mouthful of blood.

Her face went pale, and she staggered in place.

"Fellow Daoist, save me!" she cried, looking back at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's eyes were wide as he examined 'Zhixiang.' Then, a virtually imperceptible smile appeared in his eyes. Grinning, he approached.

"With me here," he said, "you have nothing to fear, Fellow Daoist."

"Someone's chasing me," said 'Zhixiang' lightly, her voice somewhat weak and yet even more enticing than before. "As I fled, I was injured. Fellow Daoist, if you can escort me to my Immortal's cave, then I'll definitely be very grateful...."

Inwardly, Meng Hao laughed loudly, and mused about how fake this whole act was, and yet he smiled the same as before, and immediately nodded. Then, he flew into the air with the woman. The two of them sped into the mountains, to an Immortal's cave. The woman gestured for him to follow her inside.

At this point, Meng Hao's eyes narrowed. The Immortal's cave seemed extraordinary. The spell formation outside radiated a sense of danger, and based on Meng Hao's cultivation base, he knew that even he would have a tough time breaking out of it.

After stepping into the Immortal's cave, the woman sighed, and then stopped and turned to Meng Hao with a charming smile.

"Many thanks, Fellow Daoist," she said, intentionally edging closer to him. "Would you mind acting as Dharma Protector for me here? Once my wounds are recovered, I'll definitely repay your kindness."

"Of course, no problem!" said Meng Hao, suppressing the urge to vomit. He backed up a few steps.

The disguised man frowned. Things weren't going according to plan, and now he wasn't sure what to do. He quickly stamped his foot onto the

ground, which instantly sent a secret notification to the bird-like man.

After a few breaths of time passed, the door of the Immortal's cave slammed open, and a monstrous aura surged out that gave Meng Hao quite a shock. A man emerged, wearing black robes, his features handsome. He even emanated the aura of a scholar.

"So, you're back, wife!" said the young man, laughing. However, when he saw Meng Hao and 'Zhixiang,' he suddenly stopped in place, and then his eyes went wide.

"Slut! You're actually committing adultery right here!?!?" The young man's face twisted with rage, and his aura exploded with power. Heaven and Earth went dark, and everything began to tremble and seemed to be on the verge of exploding. The door of the Immortal's cave exploded, and the shocking spell formation Meng Hao had seen collapsed into pieces.

A terrifying aura raged out that far exceeded the Spirit Realm. It was incredibly powerful, and made it seem as if an Immortal was descending. The entire area was instantly locked down, causing an intense sense of deadly crisis to rise up in Meng Hao's heart.

It seemed as if the person standing in front of him had an aura that could easily decide whether or not he lived or died.

"Husband, this is all just a misunderstanding...." said 'Zhixiang.'

"Misunderstanding my ass! Get the hell out of my way! Since we're husband and wife, I won't kill you this day. However, this paramour of yours had better give me some compensation! I don't care what sect he comes from, when the one surnamed Meng wants a person dead, who would dare to save him!?"

Meng Hao's eyes flickered as he looked at the young man, and a strange expression appeared on his face.

This young man looked... exactly like Meng Hao himself!

Of course, Meng Hao was wearing the bamboo hat, which changed his appearance in such a way that no one would be able to recognize him.

# Chapter 834: Take A Look and See Who I Am

"Your majesty, you are...?" Meng Hao said.

"Hmph! I'm Meng Hao!" said the young man. "The number one ruler in South Heaven!" His aura scintillated prismatically, and his words caused everything to shake.

"Number one ruler! Do you know what that means!? It means that in all the lands of South Heaven, nobody dares to provoke me!" The young man lifted his chin, and an arrogant expression covered his face.

"Quick, give him some compensation," said the 'Zhixiang.' "My husband is the number one most powerful expert in the lands of South Heaven, with the exception of some of those old-timers. He's at the peak of all South Heaven, and even ended the great continental war."

"Shut your trap!" said the young man, glaring and swishing his sleeve. "When men talk, the women should stand quietly off to the side!" He glared coldly at Meng Hao.

"Meng Hao says what he means and means what he says! Considering that this is your first offense, I'll let you off with your life, just this one time!"

Meng Hao wore an odd expression as he looked at this copy of himself talking. Then he looked over at 'Zhixiang,' and smiled. He really couldn't think of anyone other than the parrot and the meat jelly who could pull off such a mistake-ridden scam.

"Presumably, you've heard of my illustrious name," the young man continued coldly. "Alright, forget it. I'm not going to make things any harder for you. Just hand over your bag of holding, and I'll allow you to use material goods as your form of apology!"

"If you dare to resist, then you will be buried here this very day!" Once again, his aura burst out explosively, transforming into a tempest that swept across the land. Anyone who sensed such an aura would

immediately feel incredible distress. It was as if some amorphous volcano were rumbling, and if one attempted to fight back against it, it would erupt, and one would instantly be killed.

The remnants of the spell formations outside of the Immortal's cave were now completely destroyed. Sand and pebbles raged into a sandstorm; mountains collapsed and fissures covered the surface of the land. The intense aura caused a riot of colors to flash through the sky. Even Meng Hao couldn't stop his eyes from widening.

If he wasn't absolutely sure that the two fellows in front of him were the meat jelly and the parrot, if he wasn't completely familiar with the two dunces, then he would surely be thoroughly intimidated.

"Hey, how do you know this is my first offense?" said Meng Hao with an enigmatic smile.

The young man gaped, as did 'Zhixiang.'

"Dammit!" roared the young man. "Don't tell me this ISN'T your first offense!? This is ridiculous!!" He waved his sleeve once again, causing the ground to quake and mountains to collapse as his aura surged up. He looked as if he was just about to smash Meng Hao into oblivion, but then forcibly restrained himself.

Meng Hao's current manner caused the bird-like man's heart to begin to pound. Suddenly, he had a bad feeling. After exchanging a glance with the 'Zhixiang,' he snorted coldly.

"Apparently, you still don't understand Meng Hao! Do you know who my dad is? He's Fang Xiufeng!" Inwardly, the bird-like man was quite pleased with himself for assuming a role that was essentially the most powerful in all of South Heaven. In recent days, after assuming the visage of Meng Hao, he had learned about Fang Xiufeng from some other members of the Fang Clan.

"Scared yet?" he said.

Meng Hao cleared his throat, then blinked somewhat bashfully. "Are you really Meng Hao?"

"I, Meng Hao, would never change my surname OR my given name!" the young man said proudly. "Of course I'm Meng Hao!"

Meng Hao shook his head. "I heard that Meng Hao can stomp his foot down so hard that the ground shatters. Can you do that? I don't really believe that you can."

"You don't believe!?" raged the young man, glaring at Meng Hao.

"I don't!" replied Meng Hao decisively.

"Dammit! You actually don't believe!" Howling, the young man stamped his foot onto the ground. Shockingly, the Immortal's cave collapsed, the ground quaked and a huge fissure spread out.

"Well, what about that? Believe me now?!"

"That's just one single fissure," Meng Hao said with disdain. "I'm talking about shattering the earth and making a huge crater. Meng Hao can do that, what about you? Ah, forget about it. I know you can't."

"AGGGHHHH! You're really pissing me off! You really don't believe!? Dammit! Alright, pay attention. Watch and see whether Lord Fif— er, Meng Hao can do it or not!!" The young man's eyes were completely bloodshot. There was nothing he hated more than people disbelieving him, nothing dismayed him more than a provocation. He suddenly flew up into the air, then slammed back down into the ground, instantly causing a huge hole to appear.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he looked at the ground in front of him, and then compared it to the vegetation off in the distance.

A moment later, the young man flew out pompously from within the hole.

"Believe me now?!"

"It's not deep enough," sighed Meng Hao.

The young man flew into a rage. His body flickered as he once again slammed down into the hole. A huge boom echoed out, and the land quaked. It almost seemed as if the hole would extend all the way down to

the center of the planet; in fact, subterranean fire even shot up out of the hole, along with the young man. He glared at Meng Hao; from the look in his eye, if Meng Hao refused to believe him, he was willing to tear a hole all the way through the lands of South Heaven.

Meng Hao coughed lightly.

“Alright, fine, I’m scared. I have a total of ten bags of holding, how many do you want?”

“All ten!”

“Three! I want three!” cried ‘Zhixiang,’ whose eyes glittered brightly.

“Moron! We want ten!”

“You’re the moron!” the big man roared back. “Three is the biggest number! We want three!” It seemed like a fight was about to break out as ‘Zhixiang’ glared at the young man. “You idiot, three bags of holding is a lot! Y-y-you, you want ten? How many is ten? Is it bigger than three, huh?!?!”

“You IDIOT!” howled the young man. “Of course ten is more than three! Three is nothing! We want ten!!”

The big man stared in shock.

Meng Hao sighed, and decided to switch conversation partners.

“Ai, Miss Fellow Daoist, for some reason, I get the feeling that this husband of yours is acting a bit too much like a bully. No matter how you look at him, he definitely seems to be a bully. Bullies like that should really be converted. I really feel sorry for you.” To any other cultivator, these words would be incredibly childish and essentially wouldn’t have convinced anyone. It was so obvious that he wanted to stir up dissension that he might as well just have told them to fight each other directly.

Of course, the big man and the young man didn’t pick up on anything strange at all....

That was especially true of the big man. Once he heard Meng Hao say the word “bully” a few times, his eyes went wide and filled with a vicious

gleam.

“Bully? Dammit! That’s exactly what you are! You can’t do this! You’re immoral! You are far too shameless! I’m... I’m going to convert you!” Howling, the big man pounded toward the young man.

The young man nervously shot backward, letting out an equally enraged shout. However... he was slightly quicker on the pickup, and suddenly turned to look at Meng Hao.

“Hold on! Ol’ Third, wait! Something seems off here.... We can’t start fighting amongst ourselves. Something fishy is going on. Something’s not right. This guy just said a few random sentences, and suddenly we’re fighting!” Murmuring to himself, the young man looked closely at Meng Hao, and only seemed to grow more surprised.

Meng Hao was smiling the same as before as he stood there. He looked at the expression on the young man’s face, and couldn’t help but muse that the parrot actually wasn’t that stupid after all, and had finally picked up on the clues.

It was at this point that the young man suddenly cried out, “I’ve figured out his identity!! He saw through the flaws in our scam! He used only a few words to get us to fight each other. He’s obviously... Patriarch Reliance!!”

The young man let out a roar of rage, and the big man began to tremble. A popping sound could be heard as Zhixiang disappeared, and the big man reappeared. He gasped, and staggered backward several paces.

“You’re Patriarch Reliance!?!?” blubbered the big man. “You can’t blame me! He forced me to change forms! He’s the one who changed into Meng Hao!”

Meng Hao’s face darkened. No longer in the mood for fooling around, he gave a cold snort and then removed the bamboo hat.

“You two morons open your eyes wide and see exactly who I am!”

The instant the bamboo hat left his head, his aura changed completely, and his appearance became clear to the young man and the big man. When they saw Meng Hao’s face, the big man let out a shriek, and a pop

could be heard as he transformed into the meat jelly.

"It's him!" he cried, flying away at top speed. "It's Meng Hao! He's caught up to us! Finished! We're finished! We're dead for sure. DEAD! It's all your fault! YOUR fault!"

The young man shivered and let out a piercing shriek. A pop could be heard as he transformed back into a colorful parrot, within whose claws was gripped a black feather. His wings began to flap furiously as he apparently prepared to use all the power he had left in his body to make his getaway.

"Dammit! How could you possibly show up here!? This is impossible! How could we run into YOU!?!?"

Everything was in complete chaos. The parrot and the meat jelly shrieked and tried to flee at top speed. As soon as they attempted to make their escape, the land in the area distorted and returned to how it looked before. There was no fissure in the ground, no hole, no Immortal's cave, not even any fearsome restrictive spells.

There had never been an Immortal's cave in the area, only a valley. Everything had been an illusion, a very realistic illusion.

The source of the entire illusion was the black feather that the parrot gripped in its talons. The feather gave off a bizarre, flickering glow, a power that would influence the area around it and create illusions.

Meng Hao watched as the parrot and meat jelly attempted to flee. He made no move to pursue them, but instead stood there and coldly said. "I'll give you three breaths of time to get back here. Whoever returns first will be exempt from punishment. The other will receive double punishment for abandoning me in my moment of crisis that year."

As soon as his voice rang out, the meat jelly and the parrot came to a stop in midair.

"Dammit," thought the parrot, "that meat jelly has a completely one-track mind. That idiot will definitely be fooled by this. That means that the safest thing is for Lord Fifth to be fooled first!" Immediately, he turned

around and shot toward Meng Hao as fast as he could.

The meat jelly trembled.

"That parrot is completely crafty. He was the cause of all of this! He was the one who incited me to flee in the first place. There's no way I'll take his punishment for him!" Almost in the same instant that the parrot turned around, the air surrounding the meat jelly began to crackle with lightning. He employed all the power he could muster to shoot back toward Meng Hao.

"I surrender!!"

"Fudge! I also surrender!"

The parrot and the meat jelly shot back toward Meng Hao urgently. Meng Hao gave a cold snort and suddenly lifted his right hand up into the air, within which appeared the copper mirror. The parrot squawked, transforming into a beam of light that shot into the mirror.

As for the black feather, it floated down into Meng Hao's hand. The meat jelly was trembling as it began to cry out.

"Master, Lord Third has missed you to death! It was that damned parrot who dragged me with him when he left that year! It's his fault, master! Let's convert him together!"

Meng Hao slapped out with his right hand, hitting the top of the meat jelly's head. A boom could be heard as it shrank down into a tiny ball that Meng Hao grabbed in his hand then tossed down toward the ground. The ground trembled as a huge crater appeared. The meat jelly let out a miserable shriek as it bounced up and Meng Hao grabbed it again. As he proceeded forward, he bounced the meat jelly down again and again, causing it to let out continuous screeches.

"Quit faking," said Meng Hao, causing the meat jelly's screams to instantly turn into entreaties.

# Chapter 835: Pill Demon's Tribulation

For the following several days, the meat jelly spoke nonstop of all the bad things the parrot had done. From the Milky Way Sea, all the way down to their bandit days in the Eastern Lands, it revealed everything, complete with highly embellished details. It even voluntarily handed over three bags of holding that contained all of its portion of the spoils they had taken.

Meng Hao had constantly smashed it into the ground over and over during the past few days, and it feared further reprisals. Furthermore, Meng Hao's cultivation base was now incredibly high, and if he felt like it, he could use a strand of Immortal qi to seal its mouth and prevent it from speaking even a single word. To the meat jelly, that was the most terrifying thing that could happen.

As far as the parrot was concerned, Meng Hao didn't ask it any questions at all. He kept it sealed inside the copper mirror, with no chance whatsoever to even see anything that had fur or feathers. That was the greatest punishment which could possibly be inflicted on it.

After studying the black feather for a while, Meng Hao was shocked. The feather brimmed with transformative power, which was why the parrot had been able to release such an astonishing aura. It was all thanks to the feather.

According to the meat jelly, the feather had simply fallen from the sky when the two of them were on their way from the Milky Way Sea to the Eastern Lands....

Meng Hao wasn't quite sure that he believed this, but after putting the feather away, he returned to the Fang Clan. By this time, the members of the sects and clans from the Ninth Mountain and Sea had long since departed. The lands of the Southern Domain had now quieted down. Unfortunately, Meng Hao's older sister still hadn't emerged from secluded meditation.

An entire month had soon passed by.

During that time, word of Meng Hao began to spread in the world

outside of South Heaven, in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Of course, the stories told about him were always accompanied by gnashing teeth. Soon, many people in the Ninth Mountain and Sea knew that on Planet South Heaven, there was a shameless fellow who went by the name of Meng Hao.

He had monopolized the good fortune of the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple, had caused the corpse of a woman to become attached to Fan Dong'er, had captured numerous Chosen, had defeated Ji Yin in one move, and most excessive of all was his unusual habit of forcing people to write promissory notes.

No one could figure out that last matter, or guess why Meng Hao had such a strange hobby....

There was another matter that shook the Ninth Mountain and Sea during that month, and caused a huge stir among countless cultivators. Many clans took special note of the event.

The Three Great Daoist Societies, which consisted of the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto, the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite, and the Ninth Sea God World, were holding a disciple recruitment event open to all cultivators in the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

Anyone of the Nascent Soul stage or higher, but below the Immortal Realm, could participate.

Furthermore, members of the Five Great Holy Lands, the Three Churches, and Six Sects would all participate, so that this disciple recruitment event would be as grand as possible. Any rogue cultivator from the four planets and all over the 9th Mountain and Sea would be able to participate regardless of their age or heritage as long as their cultivation base met the requirements.

To most cultivators, it represented a chance to make great advancements in a single leap. This was especially true of the cultivators who normally had no way of leaving their respective planets. It was a chance they had to seize, a once in a lifetime opportunity that would change their fate if they were successful.

A disciple recruitment event such as this was something that might happen only once in a period of tens of thousands of years. Now that the event was underway, it was impossible to say when it would happen again. In the Ninth Mountain and Sea, the four great planets contained many cultivators of the appropriate cultivation base to participate. There were even more such cultivators who actually resided on the Ninth Mountain itself.

Then there were the various meteor-like islands in the Ninth Sea, which were also inhabited by numerous cultivators, as well as various other smaller worlds attached to and dependent on the Ninth Mountain and Sea. It was easy to see that an enormous number of people would be participating.

There were to be three levels of recruitment during the event. Nascent Soul. Spirit Severing. Dao Seeking. The participants from these three different stages would all compete in different areas, and would have no contact with each other.

Even more shocking was the news that anyone who got first place in any of the three stages would not only just be able to join one of the Three Great Daoist Societies, but they would immediately become a Conclave disciple, and would be rewarded with precious treasures.

That even caused the Chosen of the various great clans to be excited. Clan cultivators were not required to remain within their respective clans, but often went out to join other sects. The clans generally did not force their members to stay.

When it came to the Three Great Daoist Societies, they had existed for countless years, and apparently had histories that stretched further back than the current era.

That was one of the reasons why the Three Great Daoist Societies were so aloof, and rarely involved themselves in any sort of conflict. Actually, the only enemies the Three Great Daoist Societies had were themselves. Most important of all, they never participated in various clan struggles.

For instance, in the year Lord Ji altered the Heavens, the Three Great

Daoist Societies did not interfere in any way, seemingly because they had already seen far too many changes occur throughout the long years of their existence.

In this particular disciple recruitment event, the Three Great Daoist Societies were each looking to recruit only one disciple.

From all the vast crowds of cultivators from the Ninth Mountain and Sea, they would be the only three who were formally recruited. From this, it could be seen that whoever those three people were, their lives and destinies would soon be completely changed.

As for those who didn't end up being recruited by the Three Great Daoist Societies, it was still possible that the Five Great Holy Lands or perhaps the Three Churches and Six Sects would select them from within the competition.

News of the matter spread like wildfire throughout the Ninth Mountain and Sea, via the mouths of innumerable cultivators. Even the four great planets, including Planet South Heaven, were informed.

In fact, Lord Ji issued a Dharmic decree to Planet South Heaven, which the Ji Clan there sent throughout all the lands. In the blink of an eye, all of the cultivators on Planet South Heaven who were of the Nascent Soul stage or higher, were filled with excitement.

There were many among them who hadn't even been aware that other worlds existed outside in the starry sky. When they found out, their hearts trembled. As for those who already knew about these other worlds, they were filled with even more intense anticipation.

The whole Ninth Mountain and Sea was in a spectacular stir. The recruitment event was the subject of almost every conversation in every location.

It was at just about this time that Meng Hao received a jade slip from Grandmaster Pill Demon.

"Return to the Violet Fate Sect immediately!"

The message was short, but Meng Hao could sense Immortal will within

its words!

Fang Xiufeng stood next to Meng Hao. He wasn't looking at the jade slip, but rather, up into the sky, as he said, "Your master is about to attempt to transcend his Immortal Tribulation."

Meng Hao's heart trembled. He was well aware that true Immortal Ascension was a very difficult matter. Furthermore, he knew that when the true Immortal destiny appeared on Planet South Heaven, it would not be his. The true Immortal destiny came once every ten thousand years, and as to which of the four great planets it would appear on, that only became detectable in the few hundred years before it appeared.

Furthermore, only people born on that planet would be qualified to acquire the destiny. Since Meng Hao wasn't born on planet South Heaven, the true Immortal destiny did not belong to him.

"True Immortal destiny," said his father said calmly. "Immortal Tribulation approaches.... Your master will be competing with people who intentionally arranged for their male heirs to be born on Planet South Heaven. They will come to try to seize the Immortal destiny!"

"There will also be other peak Dao Seeking experts from South Heaven who will choose that moment to strike!"

"Your master showed great kindness to you, and that kindness will be paid back. I will act as his Dharma Protector during the true Immortal Tribulation. I will not allow anyone from the outside to enter Planet South Heaven. As for the lands of South Heaven themselves... I will leave that to you!"

Meng Hao took a deep breath, then stood and faced his father.

Fang Xiufeng flicked his sleeve, and the air around them began to distort. Ghost images sprang up in front of them, which then formed into the image of a map of the lands of South Heaven.

Fang Xiufeng stepped forward, followed by Meng Hao, and the two of them stepped into the illusory map. Meng Hao's eyes swam, and when his vision grew clear again, he could sense the aura of the Southern Domain.

In one instant, they traveled from the Fang Clan in the Eastern Lands, to the Violet Fate Sect in the Southern Domain.

The Violet Fate Sect's grand protective spell formation had long since been activated. A soft glow spread out in all directions, and the enormous statue of Reverend Violet East emanated a bright glow as well. If you looked closely, you would be able to see that Immortal qi swirled around it.

Shockingly, a person could be seen sitting cross-legged on the very top of Reverend Violet East's head. It was Pill Demon.

He opened his eyes from meditation and turned his head to look at Meng Hao and Fang Xiufeng. A kind smile broke out on his face, and he waved his hand, causing an opening to appear in the grand spell formation. A beam of light extended out toward Meng Hao.

"You go," said Fang Xiufeng. "Father will wait here for the Immortal Tribulation to start, and then act as Dharma Protector." He nodded to Meng Hao, and before Meng Hao could even enter the spell formation, sat down cross-legged and closed his eyes.

Meng Hao took a deep breath and then stepped onto the flowing light. In a flash, he appeared directly in front of the statue of Reverend Violet East, and Pill Demon.

"Master...." said Meng Hao softly, his heart filled with nervousness and worry. He already had a cultivation base with eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal. His path was different from Pill Demon's, but he could still faintly sense that when he reached one hundred percent of the power of a true Immortal, his own Tribulation would descend. That tribulation would be even more terrifying than Pill Demon's true Immortal Tribulation.

In true Immortal Tribulation, the chances of making it through alive were small.

"You should be happy for your master," said Pill Demon, smiling kindly. He looked at the disciple who had kowtowed to him three times, binding their destiny as master and apprentice. Now, his own apprentice was

already stronger than him, and that made Pill Demon happy.

"Your master has prepared for true Immortal destiny for two lives.... In my last life, I was Reverend Violet East. At the peak of Dao Seeking, I refused to become a false Immortal. I desired true Immortality, so I reincarnated to reestablish my cultivation!"

"In this life, I started out as a medicinal pill, which refined a strand of consciousness and then formed a body. Finally, I have reached this day.... Regardless of whatever destiny or tribulation there is, the next step... must be taken!"

"Even if my Dao vanishes and my body dies, I will have no regrets!" Pill Demon sighed softly, then looked up into the Heavens. His eyes gleamed with stubbornness and determination, as well as anticipation.

It was anticipation regarding the Dao, and the determination to become Immortal.

"I had thought of giving up before. Not because I didn't dare to make the attempt, but because of you. When Immortal destiny descended, how could I possibly fight over it with my own apprentice? But now, everything is clear. This Immortal destiny... belongs to your master!" As Pill Demon spoke, his energy surged, and Immortal qi flourished.

"Immortality 仙. One man 人 and one mountain 山!"

"In Immortal Ascension, a Dao Corroboration Mountain is required. The mountain statue from my first life is that Dao Corroboration. It represents my Dao Heart. I shall stand atop my first life, to search for Immortality in my second!"

Pill Demon turned to look at Meng Hao and carefully said, "Whether I succeed or fail, the next few days will be an interesting experience for you.

"Pay close attention. What you see happening will be extremely important to you in your coming true Immortal Tribulation!"

"I have your father to act as Dharma Protector, which is good. As for the other old-timers from the lands of South Heaven, they have the same mind-set as me. You don't need to interfere with them. If master isn't

confident enough to contend with them, then how could I become a true Immortal!

“You stay here and just watch as your master... transcends true Immortal Tribulation to become a true Immortal!” Pill Demon’s voice rang out, and Meng Hao took a deep breath. He looked at his master, and could sense the determination he had to corroborate his Dao, and pay any price to achieve his goal.

He did not fear death. He only feared... not achieving true Immortal Ascension!

# Chapter 836: The Door of Immortality Descends

Meng Hao's mind trembled. Seeing his master like this, and hearing the determination in his voice when he spoke of Immortal Ascension, caused his heart to twinge. He offered no words of advice, but rather sat down cross-legged, an enlightened expression on his face.

"If you wish to achieve Immortal Ascension," said Pill Demon, "you must possess incredible willpower and ambition. Fuse them into a Dao Heart, which searches for Immortality."

"That Dao Heart represents a lifetime of obsession that will cause you to feel regret to your dying day if you cannot achieve true Immortality."

Pill Demon smiled slightly, then closed his eyes. In only a few days, the true Immortal Tribulation would descend. During that time, he needed to preserve his calm mind, and keep himself at the absolute pinnacle of readiness. Then, he could be ready to meet the Immortal Tribulation that he had been waiting for two lifetimes to see!

Time passed. More and more Immortal qi began to circulate through Pill Demon's body. The Violet Fate Sect's grand protective spell formation was in full rotation, and all of the sect's disciples sat cross-legged reciting scriptures. Their will poured out, forming together to create a bizarre power that bolstered the statue of Reverend Violet East. As a result, the statue appeared to grow more and more lifelike.

Chu Yuyan was in the crowd. She saw Meng Hao, and then closed her eyes. She could sense that the gap between the two of them was only continuing to grow more vast. Meng Hao was almost an Immortal, and she was still in the Nascent Soul stage.

It was as if a vast ravine existed between the two of them that cut off any future possibilities.

The atmosphere in the lands of the Southern Domain was gradually becoming oppressive. Patriarch Song came, along with the South Cleaving

Sentinels of the Western Desert, as well as countless other cultivators. They did not approach the Violet Fate Sect, but rather took up positions around the perimeter to stand guard and act as Dharma Protectors.

Anyone who had been shown favor by Pill Demon throughout the years appeared to pay back his kindness by acting as Dharma Protectors. At the same time, in the vast Eastern Lands, as well as in other secret locations throughout South Heaven, people who had suppressed their cultivation bases and gone into secluded meditation, began to awaken. These were people who had been waiting their entire lives for true Immortal Ascension.

They stepped out into the various mountains in the wilderness that housed their places of secluded meditation, and used varied methods to approach the lands of South Heaven. They didn't interfere with the Violet Fate Sect, but rather chose nearby locations to set up their own restrictive spell formations, within which they sat cross-legged, rotating their cultivation bases as they waited for the chance to fight for Immortality!

On this occasion, all the cultivators in the lands of the Southern Domain who wished to fight for Immortality, would appear.

This was the reason that the experts from the Northern Reaches had originally decided to wage war on the Southern Domain. They had wanted to occupy the key position in the fight for Immortal destiny.

The sky gradually grew murky; even at nighttime, it was still not completely black. The heavens were in a perpetual state of evening. Furthermore, a shocking pressure weighed down on all of Planet South Heaven.

The mortals all slipped into comas, and the vegetation seemed to fall dormant and become devoid of life. The animals all lay prone on the ground in hibernation.

The highest of mountains no longer seemed high, and the rivers ceased to flow. No waves could be seen on the Milky Way Sea; it was as flat and smooth as a mirror.

It was at this point that countless beams of light appeared outside of

Planet South Heaven. Numerous teleportation portals popped up, sending ripples out in all directions. People hurried toward South Heaven from locations all over the Ninth Mountain and Sea. These were people who, by various methods, had left clan members behind on the planet who were now emerging to fight for Immortal Destiny. It was only natural for their relatives to return at this critical juncture.

However, as they neared the lands of South Heaven, a beam of sword qi rose up into the starry sky and encircled the entire planet. Fang Xiufeng's voice then resonated out.

"Planet South Heaven is now sealed. Fellow Daoists, please take your leave."

When the people rushing through the starry sky heard the echoing voice, their faces flickered. Many of them transmitted requests to step foot onto the planet, along with promises and pledges of various sorts, but Fang Xiufeng ignored them. He continued to sit with his eyes closed outside of the Violet Fate Sect, using divine sense to control the sword qi that had sealed all of Planet South Heaven.

He knew that such actions directly cut off the path of Immortality for many. He also knew that numerous other sects and clans would be displeased by the matter. Although it wouldn't affect him very much, it wasn't a good thing for Meng Hao.

Fang Xiufeng had previously explained these things to Meng Hao, who hadn't said anything in response. The determination glowing in his eyes said all that needed to be said.

"That's exactly how my son ought to be," thought Fang Xiufeng.  
"Kindness should be repaid, and enmities should be avenged!"

Planet South Heaven was sealed, making it impossible for the crowds on the outside to enter. They could only look on nervously. Some of them gritted their teeth and transformed into beams of prismatic light that tried to force their way in. However, before they could even get near, the sword qi swept out, and they were sent flying back, blood spraying from their mouths.

"That was just a warning," said Fang Xiufeng, his voice cold. "From now on, any trespassers will be executed immediately." The people on the outside were both resentful and, at the same time, filled with fear.

Three days later!

The lands of South Heaven were filled with rumbling sounds that emanated not from the planet itself, but from the starry sky overhead. It was almost as if a giant were roaring from outer space.

Roaring out to cause a character to appear!

That character, was the character 'Immortality!'"

As the sound echoed out, it seemed as if everyone in all the Ninth Mountain and Sea would hear it, and yet... it was only audible on Planet South Heaven!

At the same time, the starry sky outside South Heaven trembled, and countless shards appeared that began to form together into... an enormous door!

The door emanated boundless antiquity. It appeared to be made of bronze, and was carved with countless totemic patterns. Although it was impossible to clearly make out all the details, the archaic air of the door made it seem as if it had existed since the beginning of Heaven and Earth.

The door was somewhat dilapidated, as if it had experienced horrifying wars. Black stains could be seen on its surface that appeared to be blood, and it radiated a powerful, terrifying aura that was virtually impossible to describe. As for the size of the door, it was matchlessly gargantuan, seemingly large enough to prop up the starry sky itself.

Even Fang Xiufeng was mentally shaking after sensing the door and its aura. Were this thing a magical item, it would surely be able to suppress all living things once its power was unleashed.

When it appeared in the starry sky, the crowds of cultivators outside, who were incapable of entering Planet South Heaven, looked on with shock and couldn't help but cry out in surprise.

“The Door of Immortality has appeared! True Immortal destiny has arrived!”

“Dammit! Fang Xiufeng is blocking the way so that we can’t get in! Don’t tell me that we’re just going to have sit idly by and watch the good fortune get taken away!?”

“Does Fang Xiufeng really think that he alone can stop all of us! Let’s storm the place!” The eyes of all the onlookers were completely bloodshot.

At the same time, gusts of Immortal mist began to emanate off of the Door of Immortality, which then flowed directly toward Planet South Heaven.

It covered all of Planet South Heaven in the blink of an eye, making it seem like a planet of mist. Next, the door began to move forward, passing through the crowds to enter those mists, then sink down toward the lands of South Heaven.

As of this point, the cultivators on the outside were going crazy, and they began to charge South Heaven. In response, Meng Hao’s father sent his icy divine will out. Sword Qi rumbled, sweeping across the crowds that wished to descend onto South Heaven.

Rumbling echoed out, and the starry sky trembled. Miserable screams could be heard, and blood showered down like rain. The sword qi swept about, making it impossible for even a single person to pierce through to the lands of South Heaven.

Down on South Heaven, the sky was a mass of roiling Immortal qi that replaced the previous perpetual evening. Rumbling filled the air, the result of the mists chafing against each other; this was Immortal thunder.

There were also lightning bolts that danced about within the mists. Every single lightning bolt that appeared filled the onlookers with shock, and they felt as if their souls were about to shatter.

“Immortality!” An archaic voice spoke from within the mists, and the word echoed throughout all the lands of South Heaven, to be heard in the minds of all Dao Seeking cultivators. That character became a key that

opened the path of Immortality to any who were qualified.

“Immortality!” Pill Demon looked up and opened his eyes, which shone with intense determination. Slowly, he rose to his feet.

At the same time, there were all the other Dao Seeking experts who were now in the Southern Domain, be they from the Eastern Lands, be they experts who had suppressed their cultivation bases for an entire life, or be they cultivators like Pill Demon who had reestablished their cultivation.

All of them were waiting for this true Immortal Tribulation!

Simultaneously, all of them opened their mouths and began to speak the word ‘Immortality.’ Then, they began to fly up toward the source of that ancient voice in the mists.

Meng Hao’s mind trembled, and he rotated his cultivation base. His blood began to circulate faster; just now, the Immortal qi in his body had been stimulated, and even he had almost begun to call out ‘Immortality.’

However, he was not born in the lands of South Heaven, and was not part of the group to whom this destiny belonged. Therefore, he endured. However, everything that was happening up in the sky left him with an indelible impression.

Next, the mists began to churn. More thunder rumbled out, and countless bolts of lightning danced as a gigantic door began to descend!

The ancientness of the door was impossible to describe, as if it had existed from the beginning of Heaven and Earth. It was incredibly old, perhaps even older than the Nine Mountains and Seas. Its emergence made it seem as if the lands below were nothing in comparison. The carvings on its surface were stained with blood, and the aura it emanated left everyone breathing raggedly. It was almost as if looking at this door was looking back into the lost pages of history!

“Where did it come from?” thought Meng Hao as he looked at it. “How come it can turn people into true Immortals?” Suddenly, the bronze lamp in his bag of holding began to vibrate, as if there were some resonance between it and the bronze door.

Pill Demon lifted his head up and laughed.

“The Door of Immortality descends! This... this is true Immortal Tribulation!

“There is no tribulation for false Immortals. They only need a Dharmic decree from a true Immortal, and then they can achieve false Immortal Ascension. However, if a true Immortal dies, then his false Immortals will also die!

“That’s not the path of a cultivator. That’s charity! What cultivators cultivate defies the laws of Heaven; it is a path of freedom. How could a cultivator become an Immortal enslaved to another?!”

“Step onto the Dao Corroboration Mountain, break open the Door of Immortality during Immortal Tribulation. That is true Immortal Ascension!

“If the Door of Immortality doesn’t open, and the Immortal Tribulation does not dissipate, then what does it matter if you die?!”

Beneath Pill Demon’s feet, the mountain that was the statue of Reverend Violet East uprooted itself. Rumbling rose up as a soft and gentle power spread out, pushing Meng Hao away from the enormous statue.

At the same time, the same bizarre power caused the statue to rise up into the air and head toward the Door of Immortality.

Simultaneously, seven completely unique mountains suddenly appeared throughout the lands of South Heaven.

Of those seven mountains, the largest resembled a needle-like sword, and the smallest looked like a burial mound. Each one was different, but all seven of them belonged to ancient beings who would contend with Pill Demon over the Immortal destiny. These were the Dao Corroboration Mountains of powerful Dao Seeking experts!

In much the same fashion as Pill Demon, those powerful experts stood on their respective mountains as they rose up into the air toward the Door of Immortality.

# Chapter 837: Mistaken? I'll Still Do as I Said!

Beneath the feet of each person was a mountain that was their own Dao Corroboration Mountain. One person 人, one mountain 山, that... was an Immortal 仙!

Eight people, eight Immortals, flying through the air.

The true Immortal Tribulation was not something that would eventually fade away. No, it would only grow more and more intense until, in the end, it would be strong enough to destroy any cultivator in the Spirit Realm. Even cultivators of the Immortal Realm or the Ancient Realm... would all be destroyed when facing that level of power!

The key to transcending the tribulation was attacking the Door of Immortality!

Only by breaking open that door could the tribulation be dispersed, and successfully transcended.

Almost in the same instant that Pill Demon and the other eight began to fly up on their respective mountains, the Immortal mist up above churned, and eight bolts of lightning shot down. Each bolt of lightning was as thick as an arm, and moved with incredible speed. They contained enough power to easily eradicate any normal peak Dao Seeking expert.

A massive boom rang out from the direction of each of the eight cultivators. The ground quaked and the sky churned. Magical items were utilized and divine abilities unleashed. All eight cultivators roared and forced their way through the lightning as they continued on toward the Door of Immortality.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he hovered there in midair. He could clearly tell that of the eight bolts of lightning, his master Pill Demon's was somewhat different from the others.

That particular lightning bolt seemed to possess intelligence and personality. Although initially it seemed similar, upon closer examination,

it was clearly different.

"That's the main bolt of lighting, while the other seven are auxiliary!" he thought. "Right, father mentioned that the true Immortal destiny of this lifetime belonged to my master. Considering the level of father's cultivation base, and his vast experience, he wouldn't randomly say such a thing."

"It goes to show that the Immortal destiny of this lifetime has selected master. Therefore, the main bolt of lightning sought him out. However, the others could still seize the main position and take his place!" Killing intent flickered in Meng Hao's eyes. He had experienced many things in his time as a cultivator, and had long since developed a decisive and ruthless personality.

He didn't know these seven people, but since they were just about to fight his master over the true Immortal destiny, that made them Meng Hao's enemies.

He snorted coldly, and killing intent glittered in his eyes. He flew out and began to head in the direction of one of the old men, circulating the Immortal qi which existed inside of him as he prepared an explosive attack.

Up in midair, Pill Demon was charging toward the Door of Immortality along with the other seven cultivators.

"Hao'er, get back!" he shouted, his tone serious. "Master will fight alone for the Immortal Destiny. Stand down!" Of course, he was also concerned that considering Meng Hao's current state, participating in this Immortal Tribulation might have an influence on him in the future. Therefore, he instructed Meng Hao to hold back.

Meng Hao stopped in place. He could hear the urgency and care in his master's words, and he didn't want to cause any distractions. Therefore, he clenched his jaw and ceased his charge. However, eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal surged out explosively. Instantly, a wind whipped up, and the seven old men who were about to contend for the Immortal destiny trembled.

"Listen up, you seven!" said Meng Hao, his eyes glittering. "Do your best to fight with my master, and I won't interfere. But if any of you try any tricks, then don't blame me for attacking."

"And let's make another thing clear. Even if you succeed in getting the Immortal destiny... well, I've killed a few false Immortals and... I'm itching to try to slaughter a true Immortal." The first statement was intimidating, and the second was outright threatening. His goal was to sow chaos in the hearts of the seven contenders, to thoroughly distract them on their path to fighting for Immortality.

Immediately, two among the seven spoke, their voices cold and sinister.

"The Immortal destiny is descending on Planet South Heaven, and anyone born here qualifies to fight for it. What the hell gives you the right to say something like that!?"

"Hmph! You're playing with fire, kid! Immortal destiny is good fortune, and anyone can get it! If you dare to interfere, then you'll be fighting against the Door of Immortality. I'm also curious to know why the hell you think you can interfere with Immortal destiny!"

Clearly, these two people had been in secluded meditation for far too long, and had no idea what had happened recently in the outside world. The only reason they emerged was because of the Immortal destiny, and they had no idea who Meng Hao was. Of the rest of the seven, four were from the Eastern Lands, and didn't say anything.

"What the hell gives me the right?" said Meng Hao, flicking his sleeve. "How about my father, who's preventing people from all over the Ninth Mountain and Sea from returning to South Heaven to help the offspring they planted here on South Heaven!"

"How about the fact that if they managed to return, you would have no chance of fighting for the Immortal destiny!"

"How about the fact that the Southern Domain is my home!"

"Who cares about all that?" responded one of the old men among the seven. "Immortal destiny is in front of us and we all have the chance to get

it. Your master has been waiting for a long time, but so have we. Even if we steal the Immortal destiny, what's so wrong with that?"

Meng Hao's face darkened. Looking over the seven, he continued, "You're right, there's nothing wrong with it. My mistake. However, even if I'm mistaken, I'll still do exactly as I said."

The old men who had just spoken made no retorts. Not only could they sense the massive ripples of the huge battle being fought in the starry sky outside, they could also feel the determination in Meng Hao's words.

Rumble!

A second round of lightning descended. Booms rang out as Pill Demon and the others were shaken, and came to a stop. A third round of lightning bolts then materialized and slashed down like flying swords. Rumbling filled the air as Pill Demon and the others unleashed divine abilities and magical items. Even still, blood sprayed from their mouths.

However, they continued to press on toward the Door of Immortality. By the time the sixth round of lightning descended, they were there. They arrived at almost exactly the same time, and immediately began to levy attacks against the Door of Immortality itself.

Massive booms rattled out, and yet Pill Demon and the others, despite unleashing the full powers of their cultivation bases, could not budge the door even the slightest bit. It didn't even crack open, which caused all the hearts of all eight to begin to thump.

Down below, Meng Hao's face was anxious.

More waves of lightning crackled down. The sky churned as the ninth wave fell. These lightning bolts were as thick as water buckets, and illusory flood dragons could be seen inside of them. As soon as they appeared, wild colors flashed, and a massive pressure weighed down. The flood dragon that shot toward Pill Demon had a long horn, and was clearly different than the other seven flood dragons.

The booms that rattled out caused the land to quake and the air to shatter. Pill Demon coughed up blood, and the magical items he had just

been using collapsed into pieces. He trembled and fell back a few paces. As for the other seven, they also coughed up blood. However, they seemed to have taken less damage than Pill Demon. They gritted their teeth and resumed their attacks on the Door of Immortality.

And yet, the door still would not budge!

It was at this moment that Pill Demon raised his head and roared. Immortal qi swirled around his body, almost as if he were on fire. Beneath him, the statue of Reverend Violet East was also wreathed in flames, and the statue's eyes shone with bright light.

It almost seemed as if the statue were coming to life. As for Pill Demon, he stood on the head of the statue, performing a double-handed incantation. Then he pointed out at the Door of Immortality. Instantly, the statue trembled and, carrying Pill Demon with it, flew up directly through the lightning to appear directly in front of the Door of Immortality. The statue then clenched its right hand into a fist and punched out at the door.

Pill Demon also clenched his hand into a fist and punched out.

This was the combination of two lifetimes' worth of cultivation, all coalesced into a single strike!

The blow coming from the statue of Reverend Violet East almost seemed to be coming from ten thousand years in the past, traveling through time to appear here to join with the power of his second life and create an indescribable force.

"Immortality!" shouted Pill Demon, and his voice echoed out in all directions. The other seven cultivators were shocked to see the punch... slam directly onto the surface of the enormous Door of Immortality.

Crashing sounds filled the air as the Door of Immortality... finally moved! The combined attack of Pill Demon and the statue of Reverend Violet East caused the door to open by a tiny, tiny sliver!

In the instant that the sliver-like opening appeared, Pill Demon coughed up a huge mouthful of blood. Beneath him, the statue trembled, and almost looked as if it might collapse into pieces. However... in that

moment, the Immortal qi within Pill Demon suddenly grew denser.

Tribulation Lightning descended again. As for the other seven cultivators, one lightning bolt descended on each of them. In contrast, three bolts of Tribulation Lightning fell toward Pill Demon. Seeing this caused the seven others' faces to flicker, and their hearts to tremble.

"We can't let him continue to attack! We have to kill him!"

"He's already opened the door by a sliver! If he keeps going, the Immortal destiny will belong to him!"

"Stop him! Kill him! The only way for us to keep fighting for Immortal destiny is for him to die!"

Meng Hao's threat had been somewhat effective before, but now that the good fortune was clearly visible, and everyone had the chance to get it, how could the other seven continue to act rationally?

Killing intent flickered in their eyes. They had practiced cultivation in hiding down to this very day; they were Paragons of their generation, and this caused determination to flicker in their eyes. There were three in particular who charged directly toward Pill Demon.

"He has the aura of Immortal destiny on him! Whoever kills him will be wresting away destiny!"

As the three closed in on Pill Demon, three lightning bolts also descended. Blood sprayed from his mouth, and his face was pale; he seemed to be just on the verge of collapsing.

From his position down below, Meng Hao looked up, his eyes bloodshot. Eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal exploded out. His Dharma Idol materialized, and his energy rocketed up. He flickered, appearing in front of Pill Demon, and punched out at the incoming three cultivators.

"Don't force me to kill you!" he said, his voice echoing like thunder. His voice, backed by eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal, transformed into a destructive attack that slammed into the three men. Instantly, their faces filled with shock, and blood sprayed from their mouths. There was even one among their number whose arms exploded in

a haze of blood. A bloodcurdling scream echoed out, and a vicious gleam appeared in the old man's eyes. His eyes began to bleed black blood, and two beams of black light shot out from them. The two beams seemed capable of defiling anything and everything as they shot toward Pill Demon.

"You're looking to die!" shouted Meng Hao, his body transforming into something like a hurricane as he whistled forward through the air and let out another punch.

This punch shook the sky and rocked the land. The armless old man was simply too slow to dodge to the side. He didn't even have time to produce one of the magical items he had prepared to help transcend the tribulation. In the end, he was simply at the peak of Dao Seeking; despite the fact that he was participating in Immortal Tribulation, he had still not achieved Immortal Ascension.

"You dare to interfere with Immortal destiny!" he screamed as he died. "You will be punished!" Then he exploded, completely destroyed in body and spirit.

Meng Hao snorted coldly and turned away. In that instant, the mist up above seethed, and a sound like a roar of rage could be heard as a lightning bolt descended that was clearly different than all the other lightning bolts. This lightning bolt was crimson, and it tore a rift into the air as it shot down toward Meng Hao.

This was the punishment!

The punishment for interfering with Immortal Tribulation!

# Chapter 838: So, You Are a Thief Too!

"Hao'er!" cried Pill Demon anxiously, and was just about to assist him.

Meng Hao looked up and took a long, deep breath. As he did, his Dharma Idol was sucked inside of him. He performed an incantation gesture and then pointed up toward the red lightning bolt.

Flashes of color swept across the sky and land; mountains crumbled and the land shattered. Massive rumbling filled the air as Meng Hao was shoved downward several paces. Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth, but the red lightning bolt vanished.

"That was the punishment?" said Meng Hao, looking up. "Master, don't worry about me. You keep blasting that Door of Immortality. Apprentice... will act as your Dharma Protector!"

Pill Demon knew that his apprentice was powerful. After all, he had completely suppressed all of the experts from the Northern Reaches, and had transformed over a hundred thousand cultivators into felon citizens. The mountain called Sin of the North still stood, within which were five peak Dao Seeking experts, whose spiritual energy was being used to replenish the Southern Domain.

Pill Demon took a deep breath. He saw the determination in Meng Hao's eyes, and it filled his heart with warmth. He smiled, and then his expression turned decisive. His body flickered as he once again used the power of two lifetimes to attack the Door of Immortality.

Pill Demon knew Meng Hao, but when it came to the two remaining old men among the group who had attacked Pill Demon, this was their first time encountering him. Their faces fell, and their scalps went numb. The red lightning bolt that had fallen just now was clearly far more powerful than any of the other lightning bolts that had descended during the Immortal Tribulation. Had they been the subject of such an attack, they would surely have been killed.

And yet, the young man in front of them directly fought back against it with his own might. He didn't even use magical items, and most

importantly, the only thing that happened as a result was a bit of blood seeping out of his mouth. In their view, that made Meng Hao completely inhuman, and caused their breathing to come in ragged pants. However, they did not retreat. If one did not succeed in Immortal Tribulation, the result was death.

"If you don't do anything to interfere with my master, and simply struggle normally to acquire the Immortal destiny, then I won't do anything to you," said Meng Hao. He hovered in midair, looking at the two men in front of him, as well as the other four who were still nearby.

The six men exchanged looks. Even the cultivators from the vast Eastern Lands who knew the might of Meng Hao's status, didn't care about that by now.

"Struggle normally to acquire Immortal destiny...? Killing the lucky one and taking his destiny IS the normal way. There's no going back now!"

"There is no enmity between us, and you block our path to Immortality? That makes us irreconcilable foes!"

"There is no going back! Defeat means death! Only by killing this guy with two lifetimes can we have the chance to reach Immortal Ascension!"

Considering their hearts were filled with the desire to transcend the tribulation, how could they possibly fear death? Killing intent flickered within the six men's eyes as they suppressed their dread of Meng Hao and shot toward him.

Meng Hao stood there silently. He wanted to block their way, and had no desire to kill any of them. However, when it came to the path to Immortality, there was no right or wrong. Blocking the path to Immortality truly did make them irreconcilable foes.

Meng Hao hovered by Pill Demon. Not making his stand in this way would be the wrong thing to do. However, from the perspective of the other six men, Meng Hao's actions were an unforgivable sin!

"There is no enmity or hatred between us," said Meng Hao, his voice profound. "Perhaps blocking your way to Immortal Ascension and cutting

off your path to Immortality... will result in Karma. If so, I will do my best to accept it." A cold gleam flickered in his eyes.

As the six men closed in, Meng Hao's body flickered, and suddenly shone with boundless golden light. He transformed into a golden roc that shot screaming toward one of the incoming enemies.

From a distance, it was possible to see the golden roc swooping down, with talons sharp enough to slice metal and rock. It slammed into the old man, who was employing all of the divine abilities he could summon, as well as magical items. None of it made any difference. The gap between him and Meng Hao was too great. In a few short breaths of time, he was seriously injured and on the verge of death. At the critical moment, his eyes filled with madness and he suddenly reached out his right hand, within which appeared a jade slip.

The jade slip pulsed with Immortal qi, and emanated a feeling of nameless danger that caused Meng Hao's eyes to widen.

"DIE!" cried the old man, crushing the jade slip. This was an object he had prepared for use in a critical moment when transcending tribulation. However, considering he had been pushed into a corner, he didn't hesitate to use it now. Rumbling spread out as something like a sun materialized in front of the old man. Boundless rays of blinding light shot out from the sun as it hurtled toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao remained silently in place. He could have used the Lightning Cauldron and Form Displacement Transposition. However, out of respect toward these people and their struggle for Immortality, he did not wish to use tricks to kill them.

The jade slip unleashed incredible power, such that even a false Immortal would be shocked by it. Back when Meng Hao only had fifty percent of the power of a true Immortal, he would have had no choice other than to dodge. Now, though, he had eighty percent of that power. As soon as the sun began to explode, he lifted up his right hand, causing magical light to surge up around him. He shot forward, stabbing directly into the sun. As it exploded, Meng Hao pointed his finger toward the old

man's forehead.

The old man's eyes went wide with disbelief at what he was seeing. The item he had specially prepared to assist him in transcending this tribulation unexpectedly... was incapable of doing anything against this terrifying figure in front of him.

Smiling bitterly, the old man's eyes began to grow dim. Suddenly, however, a gleam could be seen in them once more, as if in looking at Meng Hao, he had suddenly realized something. His eyes went wide, and he laughed loudly.

"So, it turns out you are a thief too."

A boom could be heard as the sun exploded. Before the ripples could even begin to spread out, Meng Hao was back in his original position. As for the old man, none of his aura could be sensed anymore.

Meng Hao waved his hand, and the old man's corpse began to peacefully float back down to the ground.

The Immortal mist up above began to rumble loudly, and a red bolt of lightning even bigger than the previous one suddenly began to fall. It moved with incredible speed, giving Meng Hao almost no time to react.

A rumble could be heard as Meng Hao's golden roc collapsed into pieces. Meng Hao himself reappeared, coughing up a mouthful of blood. Then he took a deep breath and shifted his gaze toward another of the incoming old men.

The old man's face was pale white, and filled with the utmost astonishment.

"After all my years in secluded meditation, how could someone so inhuman have appeared in the lands of South Heaven!" he exclaimed bitterly. "Just who is this man!? Tribulation Lightning can't kill him, and he's already killed two of us! Don't tell me this how our Tribulation will end!?!?" The old man wasn't willing to give in. His eyes gleamed with venomous madness, and, knowing that he couldn't hide or flee, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a bottle of blood. He placed it against his

lips and consumed the entire bottle, and his energy suddenly began to flow in reverse. At the same time, a bloody mist began to emerge from the top of his head.

His face distorted, and veins bulged out on his face as he let out a vicious roar like that of a wild animal.

“Blocking my path to Immortality is the same as cutting off my chance at life! If I can’t achieve Immortal Ascension, then I am certain to die. Therefore... it doesn’t matter whether I die by the Immortal Tribulation or by your hand. There’s no difference!” Face filled with bitterness, the old man charged Meng Hao.

Simultaneously, lightning crashed, as Immortal Tribulation Lightning bolts descended one after another. They grew stronger and stronger, causing everything to shake. Pill Demon once again neared the Door of Immortality. Surrounded by rumbling sounds, he focused the power of two lifetimes, braced himself against the Immortal Tribulation, and attacked the Door of Immortality again.

Blood sprayed from Pill Demon’s mouth, and the Door of Immortality trembled as it opened slightly further. However, it was in that instant the remaining four old men unleashed divine abilities and magical techniques in a direct attack against Pill Demon.

It was a moment of grave crisis. Pill Demon was already seriously injured, and was fighting back with everything he had. Not only was he forced to fight these four people, but lightning continued to fall on all of them. Everything was shaking as Meng Hao battled against the beast-like old man.

The old man roared as he fought. He wasn’t a match for Meng Hao, but in his heart, he was prepared to die, and didn’t care about defending himself. He attacked with full power, causing Meng Hao to sigh as he lifted his right hand and utilized the Star Plucking Magic. A gigantic hand appeared out of thin air, and crushed down on the old man, whose body was smashed into pieces as he screamed.

Meng Hao did his best to keep the body intact as it floated back down

toward the ground, then he shot toward the remaining four old men who were attacking Pill Demon. Up above, a third red lightning bolt formed within the roiling clouds. This time, the lightning also contained blackness, which made the entire lightning bolt appear violet. As it slammed into Meng Hao, his body trembled, and he coughed up two mouthfuls of blood before he managed to continue onward.

He transformed into a golden roc that shot toward the remaining cultivators who were fighting Pill Demon. At the same time, lightning descended onto Pill Demon. Blood sprayed from his mouth, and the mountain beneath his feet seemed on the verge of collapsing.

Magical light swirled around Meng Hao as he closed in, transforming into a cyclone. Rumbling filled the air as he attacked the four old men, forcing them into retreat, blood spurting from their mouths. They smiled bitterly, and at the same time, their desire to kill grew even stronger.

“All of you, stop forcing my hand!” said Meng Hao, standing firm in front of Pill Demon. Pill Demon’s face was pale and he appeared to be on the verge of collapse. He consumed some medicinal pills and then attacked the Door of Immortality once again with all the strength he could muster.

The door trembled, and the crack opened wider. More Immortal Tribulation descended.

The glittering glow of lightning covered the land, and Meng Hao stood between Pill Demon and the four other cultivators, almost like a massive, uncrossable ravine!

“There is nowhere to turn back to! Unless we kill this cultivator with two lives and steal his destiny, there is no way we can break open the door!”

“Death lies on the left and the right. Life only exists straight ahead! If we die, we’ll die fighting!”

“We have waited for this day for too long. Now that it is here... it seems it truly is a tribulation....” The four men began to laugh loudly. Their hearts were focused on striving for the Dao, a desire that had not lessened even now.

Laughing, they transformed into beams of colorful light, burning their cultivation bases to achieve the absolute pinnacle of power as they shot toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's expression was complex. Silently, he took a deep breath as the four cultivators bore down on him. His Dharma Idol suddenly began to expand, transforming into a giant that stepped toward the four incoming old men. It became something like a wall that the four of them then slammed into.

A huge boom rattled out, and everything shook as an astonishing shockwave spread out. However, because of the Dharma Idol, none of the ripples interfered with Pill Demon.

Pill Demon looked over at Meng Hao silently. Although he said nothing, it was clear that everything that was happening was being etched deeply onto his soul.

"If this sows Karma," he murmured, "then I refuse to allow my apprentice to bear it! Let their souls be entangled with mine for all generations to come!" With that, his body flashed as he attacked the Door of Immortality yet again. The statue beneath his feet seemed to be on the verge of collapse, and his own body appeared to be at its limit. However, the attack shook the door, which was now opening even wider than before. At the same time, however, the Tribulation Lightning was getting even stronger!

Meanwhile, the four old men on the other side of the Dharma Idol were like lamps with little oil left in them. Laughing bitterly, they all suddenly flew straight up into the air. They did not wish to die by Meng Hao's hands, but rather, chose to die by Immortal Tribulation!

They flew up, and the Immortal Tribulation descended. Booming sounds rang out as all of them were destroyed in body and soul.

Although Meng Hao didn't kill them himself, they had died because of him. In the same moment that they died, the mist in the sky above seethed, and something like a roar of rage echoed out. Massive quantities of red lightning bolts began to form together, transforming into a sea of

lightning than then shot down toward Meng Hao.

From a distance, the massive quantity of lightning looked almost like a huge hand that wished to crush Meng Hao to death.

# Chapter 839: True Immortality is a Challenge!

Despite the level of Meng Hao's cultivation base, the massive lightning hand that descended caused him to feel a sense of impending doom. Almost as soon as it began to fall from the sky, Meng Hao's eyes glinted with madness. He raised his hand, and the Blood Demon Grand Magic surged with full power. Rumbling filled the air, and his entire body radiated magical light.

In the blink of an eye, all existence was illuminated by the glow of his magic.

At the same time, the Blood Demon Grand Magic vortex roared like a beast from ancient times. All the cultivators in the Violet Fate Sect could clearly see a red horn protruding from the middle of the vortex.

Next, a gigantic head appeared, the head of a Blood Demon that then hurled itself directly toward the glittering lightning hand.

When they met, the resulting explosion caused all creation to shake violently. The Blood Demon head's horn shattered, after which, the entire head collapsed into pieces. The blood-colored vortex shattered, as did Meng Hao's Dharma Idol.

As for the lightning hand, it was also shaken. One finger after another collapsed, until all that remained was a single finger that continued to jab viciously down toward Meng Hao.

Just when it was about to slam into him, Meng Hao's body began to shine with boundless golden light. He became a golden roc, which flapped its wings, sending him speeding off into the distance. As the palm raced after him in pursuit, Meng Hao rotated his cultivation base and then unleashed another divine ability. He pointed directly toward the incoming palm.

BOOM!

A huge crash could be heard, and the lightning palm vanished. Blood

sprayed from Meng Hao's mouth, and he staggered backward to a position nearly three thousand meters away. After coughing up seven successive mouthfuls of blood, he finally came to a stop.

His face was pale, and his body was wracked with trembling. Sparks of electricity continued to dance around his body, and he had lost more than half of his qi and blood. There was a massive wound in his chest, which burned with intense pain.

Meng Hao gritted his teeth and looked up; his eyes shone with a boundless, intense light.

He had completely surpassed the Tribulation Lightning's punishment!

As of this moment, all of the Southern Domain cultivators who had come to act as Dharma Protectors for Pill Demon were left in complete and utter shock. What they had just witnessed exceeded anything they had ever seen before in their lives.

They had the impulse to rush to help Pill Demon in his true Immortal Tribulation. However, the massive pressure that weighed down not only filled them with awe, it made it impossible for them to even fly into the air.

They could only look on as Meng Hao acted, and his intense strength only deepened their impression of him.

In the Violet Fate Sect, all of the disciples' minds were shaken. Everything that Meng Hao was doing caused their gratefulness to him to become even more intense.

Were it not for Meng Hao's presence, Pill Demon might still have been able to avoid death during this tribulation. However, it definitely would have been much more difficult to acquire the true Immortal destiny. And if he had failed... he would have perished and his soul would have been dispersed.

Meng Hao wiped the blood from his mouth and looked up into the sky. He saw his master Pill Demon, standing on the damaged statue of Reverend Violet East, once again combining the power of two lifetimes to

strike the Door of Immortality.

Once, twice, three times....

He struck the door again and again, and it continued to open wider and wider. At the same time, more Immortal Tribulation Lightning descended, with increased intensity. By now, all of Pill Demon's magical items were in use, and the Immortal Tribulation had reached a shocking level of intensity.

The Violet Fate Sect's grand spell formation was activated to the fullest extent to help Pill Demon fight back against the Immortal Tribulation. However, the Immortal Tribulation was growing more intense, and the Door of Immortality was only forty percent open! There was still another sixty percent to go!

"Fellow Daoist Pill Demon, use this magical item of mine!"

"Senior Pill Demon, take my magical item!"

"Pill Demon, this is a treasure I prepared to help you transcend the tribulation!"

Many among the crowds down below began to produce various magical items. They severed their own connection with them and then tossed them up into the sky.

The magical items transformed into countless beams of glowing light that shot toward Pill Demon and then swirled around him. These were all lightning-resisting items, and all of them were extremely valuable.

At this moment, they didn't hesitate for even a second to give them to Pill Demon. Pill Demon trembled, and his heart filled with appreciation. Now was not the time for words, though. He took a deep breath, clasped hands to the crowds below, and then waved his arm, causing the hundreds of magical items to emit a boundless glow that fought back against the Immortal Tribulation!

Meng Hao hovered off in the distance, watching the scene. He also waved his hand, sending a magical item out, his beast claw. It emitted an incisive glow that, when it joined the other magical items around Pill

Demon, transformed into a bizarre light.

Meng Hao's eyes gleamed with the anticipation of being able to bear witness to his master becoming a true Immortal.

RUUMMMMBLLEEEE!!

Bolt after bolt of Immortal Tribulation Lightning slammed down, without end. Soon, they were so numerous that they became a lake of lightning. It was almost as if a hole had been ripped into the sky, and lightning was falling like rain in a violent downpour.

Pill Demon's figure was submerged in the lightning to the point where onlookers couldn't see him clearly. Only Meng Hao was just barely able to see him.

The blasts against the Door of Immortality continued. Fifty percent. Sixty percent....

The magical items surrounding Pill Demon were beginning to shatter. In the instant that the door opened by sixty percent, even Meng Hao's beast claw collapsed into pieces. By the time all of the magical items were destroyed, Pill Demon was like a flickering lamp about to be extinguished. He laughed bitterly, and looked up at the Tribulation Lightning, then at the Door of Immortality, which was only sixty percent opened. Then, he sighed.

"True Immortality really is a challenge...." he said, his voice filled with pain. "A chance that comes once in ten thousand years, and is incredibly difficult.... Despite my best efforts, I fell short by forty percent." The sky rumbled, and the lake of lightning screamed. It seemed to cover everything, filled with destructive power as it bore down onto Pill Demon, who stood in front of the Door of Immortality.

However, at this moment, Meng Hao's eyes glittered, and he smacked his bag of holding. The meat jelly appeared, and Meng Hao threw it into the air before it could even react. It shrieked as it became a beam of prismatic light that shot toward Pill Demon and the Heavenly Tribulation.

"Master, keep battering that door!" yelled Meng Hao. As soon as the

meat jelly reached the lake of lightning, it let out a curse and then opened its mouth. It began to inhale, and the lake of lightning trembled, then began to move toward the meat jelly.

Popping sounds rang out from the meat jelly, and it turned completely black in the blink of an eye.

“Meng Hao you bastard, you bully! You’ve gone too far! Y-y-you...! Lord Third is gonna convert you!”

Pill Demon trembled, but didn’t hesitate for a moment to lash out toward the Door of Immortality with all of his power. The meat jelly continued to consume the lake of lightning, and currently, no more Immortal Tribulation Lightning fell. Pill Demon went all out, combining two lives’ worth of good fortune to break open the Door of Immortality!

Seventy percent....

Eighty percent!

When the door opened by eighty percent, a boundless glow of Immortal light spilled out, as well as thick Immortal qi. Instantly, the sky became like an Immortal paradise, and the air filled with the music of great Daos, as well as the sound of scriptures being chanted.

The cultivators down below, and the disciples of the Violet Fate Sect, were bathed in the light of Immortality. Their cultivation bases instantly began to rotate as they acquired good fortune.

However, it was in this moment that the meat jelly let out an agonized shriek. It trembled, and countless rips spread out across its body. Although it was capable of consuming Immortal Tribulation Lightning, it could only withstand so much. Finally, it screamed and flew away, unable to hold on any longer.

The lake of lightning once again rumbled down, enveloping Pill Demon. Pill Demon roared and caused his cultivation base to explode at full power to fight back. His entire body shook violently, and the statue of Reverend Violet east was starting to collapse.

Meng Hao was getting very worried. However, something suddenly

occurred to him, which caused him to take a deep breath. Without any hesitation, he summoned his second true self. He extended his hand and pointed, and his second true self began to tremble. His eyes grew dim as his soul flew out of the top of his head.

This was... a true Immortal's soul!

In the past, Patriarch Blood Demon had mentioned that this soul would be strangely effective when transcending tribulation, most especially when reaching true Immortal Ascension.

Meng Hao wasn't sure if the soul of the true Immortal would be of any help in this situation; no matter how he had contemplated it or observed it in the past, it didn't seem useful for anything. Having no other options, Meng Hao extracted the soul itself.

In the instant in which the true Immortal's soul emerged, all of the lightning that was striking toward Pill Demon suddenly stopped in place. Then, it abruptly left Pill Demon and shot toward Meng Hao, or, more accurately speaking, toward the soul of the true Immortal.

This soul... could actually attract Immortal Tribulation!

Rumbling filled the air as the lightning shot forth. It rapidly surrounded the true Immortal's soul, as if it violated some Heavenly decree, and deserved to die a horrific death at the hands of the lightning.

With no lightning striking him, Pill Demon, his eyes completely bloodshot, went all out. Both he and the Dharma Protecting cultivators below had expended all the resources they could. This was the critical moment. If there was no success now, the result would be death!

Pill Demon roared, and his body burst into flames. He was burning his life force, as was the statue of Reverend Violet East beneath him. This was the power of two lives' worth of cultivation base.

Within the flames, Pill Demon turned into something like a shooting star that sped toward the Door of Immortality. He would blast into it with all of the power of his life force.

A huge boom rattled out through the entire Southern Domain, and, in

fact, through all the lands of South Heaven, as the Door of Immortality was knocked open even more.

Ninety percent!

Massive rumbling could be heard as the statue of Reverend Violet East collapsed. Pill Demon had aged dramatically, and he looked as if he were at the very end of his life. However, he was not willing to give up. Roaring at the top of his lungs, he used the power of his life force to once again strike against the Door of Immortality, like a moth drawn to the flame.

BOOM!

The sound shook all of Planet South Heaven, and even rolled out into the starry sky, to be heard by all of the people outside who were trying to fight their way past Meng Hao's father.

When they heard the sound, everyone felt as if... their minds were reverberating with the tolling of bells.

The Door of Immortality... was ninety-five percent open. Only a tiny sliver... and it would be completely open!

However, it was in this moment that the sky churned, and a wind sprung up in the seething mists!!

This was a Spirit Extermination Tribulation Wind, the second stage of tribulation that came after the Tribulation Lightning!

When the wind blew, Pill Demon, who was already like a sputtering candle, whose statue of Reverend Violet East had already been destroyed, began to fade away.

He had failed.

In this moment, all the lands went quiet, and everyone who was watching the scene felt waves of sorrow rise up in their hearts. The sound of wailing began to drift out of the Violet Fate Sect.

Pill Demon's body began to rapidly vanish. Behind him, the Door of Immortality started fading away....

It was ninety-five percent open, with only a tiny bit left to go!

Pill Demon sighed. He felt no bitterness. However, his reluctance to part with the world could be seen on his face. He did not wish to leave the people he knew down below. He did not wish to say goodbye to his apprentice. Nor did he wish to abandon his Dao. But he had reached the end.

Pill Demon wanted to say something, but by this point, he couldn't speak. His body was growing illusory, and half of it had already transformed into ash and been destroyed. The rest of his fleshly body was now continuing to turn into ash. His skin fell off, and he began to vanish into the air.

He could only use his gaze to offer his blessings to all of the crowds of people down below.

Meng Hao was trembling, and his eyes were shot with blood. Seeing that the Door of Immortality was fading, and that Pill Demon was on the verge of death, he couldn't hold back. He shot forward.

"Master, I'm coming to help!"

# Chapter 840: The Path Ahead Lies In The Stars, Not On This Planet

Spirit Extermination Tribulation Wind was the second form of true Immortal Tribulation, and was far more powerful than the Tribulation Lightning from earlier. Once the wind blew, the fleshly body would scatter, and the soul would vanish.

In the instant that Pill Demon's body began to fade away, Meng Hao unhesitatingly shot forward. There was no time to consider the danger he may be facing, nor was he thinking about how his actions might benefit him in the future. In this moment, the only thing he was thinking about... was how kindly his master Pill Demon had treated him.

That kindness had originated in the days of the Violet Fate Sect, and had grown with all the little things that happened after that. It was the relationship of a master and an apprentice.

Back when he didn't know where his father and mother were, back before his father-son experience with Ke Yunhai, Pill Demon had been the only parental figure in his life that had cared about him.

Because of that, Meng Hao charged in without hesitation.

As soon as he entered the Spirit Extermination Tribulation Wind, his fleshly body began to vanish, his soul began to get blurry, and his spirit began to gradually disappear. However, he didn't care about any of that.

Time seemed to stretch out, but Meng Hao was filled with determination, and as he closed in on Pill Demon, he used all the power he had to fight back against the agony that the deadly wind sent through him. Then he grabbed Pill Demon and rammed the Door of Immortality himself!

Head first!

BOOM!

The Door of Immortality had been on the verge of fading away, but now

it trembled. That tiny bit that had remained unopened, was now thoroughly gone! The door was completely open! Rumbling filled the air, and majestic Immortal light poured out. Meng Hao had used every scrap of strength he could muster to push Pill Demon into the Door of Immortality!

Blood sprayed from Meng Hao's mouth, and his entire body became incredibly withered, almost completely fading away. Now, he was shooting down toward the ground at rapid speed.

Everything happened so quickly that the people down below didn't even have time to react. Meng Hao slammed into the ground and flopped over a few times. His body was virtually in pieces, his flesh decayed, his aura incredibly weak. However, his eyes shone brightly, completely devoid of any regret as he looked up into the sky.

Up above, Pill Demon could be seen within the Door of Immortality. His eyes were somewhat blank at first, but as soon as he entered the door, his entire body surged with boundless Immortal qi. It rapidly swirled around him, reforming his body anew. At the same time, the tribulation mist up above no longer sent down tribulation, but rather, swirled toward the Door of Immortality.

At the same time, boundless Immortal light rose into the sky. Immortal qi surged, and Dao music floated about. Pill Demon was surrounded by swirling lights as the aura of a true Immortal came into being around him.

"In my previous life, I was Violet East, and in this life, Pill Demon. For a lifetime, I focused everything on cultivating the Dao of alchemy.... Now, I am a true Immortal, and have formed true Immortal pill qi.... This qi contains my life force, and I won't restrain it inside of me. Instead, I will give it to my apprentice...." Pill Demon looked down at Meng Hao down below, and his expression was one of kindness and gratitude. He extended his right hand, and suddenly, a beam of green qi flew out toward Meng Hao.

As it flew through the air, flowers bloomed, sleeping animals awakened, and rainbows filled the sky. All the lands filled with a majestic medicinal

aroma. This was the life force pill qi formed as Pill Demon became a true Immortal, and it exceeded even an Immortal pill!

Meng Hao couldn't refuse this pill qi even if he wanted to. In the instant it fused into his body, all of his injuries began to heal up. Furthermore, his Eternal stratum, which had never fully recovered, was now completely restored.

With his Eternal stratum fully returned, Meng Hao's body filled with roaring sounds. His injuries healed completely, and he rose to his feet. He looked at his master up in the sky and then clasped hands and bowed deeply.

As Pill Demon stood within the Door of Immortality, more and more Immortal qi began to gather. Everyone present felt some of that qi washing over them, like a baptism, and their cultivation bases experienced advancement. There were even some who made cultivation base breakthroughs because of it.

The aura of a true Immortal around Pill Demon became more and more intense. After the space of about ten breaths, rumbling filled the air, and Pill Demon began to radiate a mighty pressure similar to that of Meng Hao.

True Immortal!

As his energy surged, true Immortal will became even more apparent, although it was different than Meng Hao's. Boundless light radiated off of Pill Demon. His soul became the soul of a true Immortal, and his Dao became the Dao of a true Immortal.

His body... became the body of a true Immortal!

In this instant, he was thoroughly, in all aspects, a true Immortal!

The Door of Immortality also rumbled. Apparently, there was an entire world inside of it, a world that others could not see. Even Meng Hao could barely make out any details. Only Pill Demon could see it clearly, and when he looked at that world inside the Door of Immortality, his body trembled.

Next, a beam of Immortal light emerged from inside the door, within which was a scroll. When the scroll unfurled, one could see that countless names were written upon it.

Some of the names were dim, as if the people to whom those names belonged were now dead. But others shone with light as bright as the sun. It was impossible to see exactly how many there were. These were... all of the true Immortals who had existed in the boundless history of the great Nine Mountains and Seas.

There seemed to be many, but in actuality, when compared to the vast population of cultivators in the Nine Mountains and Seas, true Immortals... were as difficult to find as phoenix feathers or qilin horns.

After all, the Nine Mountains and Seas would only produce nine true Immortals every ten thousand years, one for each of the Mountains and Seas.

Of course, there were also the Immortality Illumination Vines, which meant that the number was larger than that. Even so, the number of true Immortals that appeared in the Nine Mountains and Seas in any ten thousand year period would not exceed one hundred.

And as of now, a new name appeared on that scroll.... Pill Demon!

This meant that as of now, Pill Demon was a true Immortal in all respects!

Furthermore, in the following one thousand years, there would be Chosen in the Nine Mountains and Seas who used Immortality Illumination Vines to also become true Immortals. Their names would also appear on the scroll, although no one would be there to see that happen. Only after another ten thousand years had passed, and someone else acquired Immortal destiny and achieved true Immortal Ascension, would anyone be able to see them.

The Door of Immortality faded soundlessly, transforming into a beam of light that shot up into the sky and out into space. As for all the crowds in the starry sky, the ones trying to get into Planet South Heaven, they sighed and stopped in place. None of them said anything as they slowly turned

and left, filled with regret.

Of course, it would be difficult for them not to harbor resentment toward Fang Xiufeng, and the person down below who had succeeded in becoming a true Immortal.

It was at this moment that an enormous teleportation portal suddenly appeared in the starry sky. Boundless light spread out to cover everything, and an old man materialized, mounted on a white deer.

The old man's features were ordinary, and he wore a smile. The white deer he rode had a vicious set of antlers, and its eyes shone with a savage glow. It was only a white deer, and yet, it emanated a completely shocking aura. When the old man made his appearance, everything trembled, and the starry sky went dim. Among the departing crowds were people who recognized the old man, and instantly gasped.

"Daoist Kunlun from the Kunlun Society!" 1

"The Kunlun Society is one of the most mysterious of the Three Churches and Six Sects, and Daoist Kunlun is their Sect Leader!!"

"I can't believe that he actually showed up here.... That white deer must be the fiendish deer that wreaked havoc in the Ninth Mountain fifty thousand years ago!"

Fang Xiufeng's eyes glittered, and his pupils constricted a bit.

"Greetings, Daoist Kunlun." Despite how powerful he himself was, Meng Hao's father clasped hands and bowed deeply to Daoist Kunlun.

"Xiufeng," replied the old man with a smile, "I'm here to get my apprentice back. He inherited my teachings via a dream of mine, and his name is Violet East. Now that he has achieved true Immortality, the time has come for him to return." Everyone in the area looked on in shock. Many people's eyes widened, and the hatred they had been feeling toward the person who had just become a true Immortal, vanished completely.

The Kunlun Society was one of the Three Churches and Six Sects, and were shrouded in mystery. They kept their secrets to themselves. Furthermore, had they lent their assistance to Lord Ji when he altered the

Heavens, the Kunlun Society would have become a Holy Land, and there would now be more than five Holy Lands.

Fang Xiufeng's eyes widened, but he said nothing. Daoist Kunlun did not pressure him, but instead smiled.

A moment later, the image of Fang Xiufeng that had materialized outside of Planet South Heaven stepped aside, then gestured for Daoist Kunlun to enter. Daoist Kunlun smiled and nodded.

"I will not forget this kindness," he said. Everyone watched as the white deer approached Planet South Heaven and then appeared in the Violet Fate Sect in the Southern Domain.

When Meng Hao caught sight of the old man riding the white deer, his jaw dropped.

Up in midair, Pill Demon saw the old man, and an absent-minded expression could be seen on his face, as if he had suddenly recalled something. He approached the old man, clasped hands, and bowed deeply.

"Do you remember now?" said the old man, smiling.

"I remember. Greetings, master!"

"In the childhood of your previous life, I appeared in your dreams to offer guidance in your cultivation, pointing the way to the Dao of alchemy. In that life, before your Nirvanic Rebirth, I left, and you asked when we would meet again."

"At that time, I said that when you reached true Immortal Ascension, that you would become my Legacy Apprentice."

"Today, I'm here to accept you." The old man smiled.

Pill Demon took a deep breath, then bowed once again.

"Master, my own apprentice, he...."

"He has his own path. Come, it's time to leave. Who knows, you may meet him again soon in the future. However, there are a few people within the sect you founded that have the necessary latent talent, and we can bring them along too." After a glance and nod at Meng Hao, Daoist

Kunlun's eyes swept over the rest of the Violet Fate Sect. He raised his hand, and seven or eight people, including Chu Yuyan, slowly flew up into the air with stunned looks on their faces.

"Let's depart. You shall walk the path of Kunlun, and speak of the Dao of Kunlun. From now on, your cultivation will leave with the desire to prostrate yourself before Kunlun."

Daoist Kunlun chuckled, then waved his sleeve, sweeping up Pill Demon, Chu Yuyan and the others as he turned to leave.

Pill Demon looked back at Meng Hao with an encouraging look in his eyes.

Chu Yuyan also looked back, but she looked as confused as ever. Complex emotions could be seen in her eyes as she looked at Meng Hao, but then, her eyes grew calm. She nodded at Meng Hao, and then turned away.

Meng Hao looked on in shock as Pill Demon, Chu Yuyan and the others were taken away by Daoist Kunlun. Gradually, they disappeared off into the starry sky.

Then his father appeared next to him.

"Planet South Heaven is too small," he said softly. "You and your master, and even that little girl, all have your own paths to tread... out in the stars, not on this planet."

"Don't waste time missing them. The Ninth Mountain isn't a very big place either. You'll see them again one day."

\*

1. Kunlun is a pretty famous part of Chinese mythology.

# Chapter 841: The Ancient Road of Trial by Fire is Opened!

"The next time we meet," murmured Meng Hao, "it will be out in the starry sky." The departure of Pill Demon, Chu Yuyan, and the others, was too sudden, and left him feeling empty.

He thought back to his hundreds of years of cultivation, and it seemed like there many people who had ended up departing, and were no longer in the lands of South Heaven.

Patriarch Reliance was gone. Xu Qing was gone. Pill Demon was gone. Chu Yuyan was gone....

Thankfully, Fatty, Chen Fan, and the others were still there. There were some people Meng Hao wasn't sure about; the 10th Wang Clan Patriarch for example, Han Bei from the former Black Sieve Sect, and of course Dong Hu, who had joined the Reliance Sect at the same time as him.

Meng Hao sighed. He did not leave the Southern Domain along with his father. Instead, he went to the Golden Frost Sect. He and Fatty drank together. Fatty sent his more than one hundred beloved concubines away, and he and Meng Hao sat on top of a mountain, drinking and talking about the past.

They talked about the State of Zhao, and about Yunjie County. They talked about the Reliance Sect, and everything that had happened there. Eventually, evening fell, and the stars slowly came out. It was impossible to tell how much exactly they had drunk.

"I'm going to join the disciple recruitment event held by the Three Great Daoist Societies of the Ninth Mountain and Sea!" declared Fatty, tossing aside his alcohol flagon and looking determinedly over at Meng Hao. "I don't want to be stuck in the lands of South Heaven for the rest of my life. I want to go out into the starry sky!"

Meng Hao looked back at Fatty. He himself had heard from Zhixiang about the Three Great Daoist Societies' disciple recruitment trial by fire.

News about the matter had now spread throughout the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea, even here to Planet South Heaven.

Fatty gazed at Meng Hao with an expression of determination.

"You don't need to say anything," Fatty continued. "I know that you won't stay in the lands of South Heaven for much longer either. Your path exists in the starry sky. Well, we're brothers, so if you go, then I won't stay behind! I'm going to give it a shot!"

Meng Hao didn't respond at first. He simply lifted his wine flagon and took a drink, looked at Fatty, and smiled.

Then he said, "Considering those teeth of yours, you'll definitely get some good fortune!"

Fatty laughed uproariously, then grabbed a flying sword and began to file at his teeth. The two of them laughed together, and then continued to chat until the sky turned bright. Meng Hao stayed with Fatty for a few days before leaving. The next stop on his journey through the Southern Domain was to visit Chen Fan.

Chen Fan sat as he always did, next to the mountain boulder. Meng Hao meditated silently next to him. Chen Fan no longer drank alcohol, but the stubble of a beard was still visible on his chin. An abstruse gleam could be seen deep in his eyes, but most of his time was spent gazing at the boulder, as if he were immersed in memories.

Meng Hao didn't interrupt him, but rather sat next to him for an entire night.

When the sky grew bright and the time had come for Meng Hao to leave, Chen Fan suddenly said, "I've decided to go to the trial by fire held by the Three Great Daoist Societies."

Meng Hao nodded and left.

His next stop was the Blood Demon Sect. He saw Wang Youcui, who, much like Fatty and Chen Fan, was interested in the trial by fire.

He also decided to participate, to take a chance for his future.

Meng Hao didn't see Patriarch Blood Demon. Outside of Patriarch Blood Demon's Immortal's cave, Meng Hao could sense a dense aura of death. He stood there for a long time before finally clasping hands and bowing deeply.

"Senior, I will never forget your kindness in helping me to Sever the Devil and Seek the Dao!" He bowed again.

The aura of death was the same as ever as Meng Hao finally turned to leave. Off in the distance, he could see the valley where he and Xu Qing had spent their final days together, as well as the location where they had been married.

It was a mountain, on one side of which were the beautiful memories of Xu Qing, on the other side of which was carnage and battle. That was where he and Xu Qing had been married.

As he gazed at the location, Meng Hao suddenly felt very lonely. After staring for a long moment, he finally left.

Now, he wasn't sure where to go in these sprawling lands. All he could do was look up into the starry sky.

"Perhaps it's time for me to leave as well."

Two months passed in the blink of an eye. Meng Hao went to the Milky Way Sea, to the Western Desert, to the Northern Reaches, and finally to the Eastern Lands. Eventually, the day came when the sky began to rumble, and the music of a great Dao spread out in all directions. Three enormous, multi-colored vortexes appeared in the sky.

The three vortexes' rotation caused a sound to echo out that could be heard by all cultivators in the lands of South Heaven. Be they in the Western Desert or the Southern Domain, in the Northern Reaches or the Eastern Lands, in that instant they could all see the three bizarre vortexes up above.

They looked like they were up in the sky, but actually, they existed in everyone's eyes.

Regardless of where the cultivators were located, as long as their

cultivation bases met the requirements, and they had the desire to seek the Dao and find good fortune, then all they had to do was take a step forward and enter the vortex.

At the same time the vortexes appeared, an archaic voice echoed out from within them. Everything trembled, and no natural law could prevent the voice from echoing out as if from ancient times, striking fear into the hearts of all.

"The trial by fire was founded by the Three Great Daoist Societies, the Five Great Holy Lands, and the Three Churches and Six Sects!

"Anyone in the Ninth Mountain and Sea may participate, regardless of background, regardless of age, as long as the cultivation base requirement is met!"

"The three vortexes are for the Nascent Soul stage, the Spirit Severing stage, and the Dao Seeking stage!"

"First, walk upon the Ancient Road. The ten thousand people who reach the end the fastest will be able to participate in the honorable trial by fire!"

"Of those ten thousand people, seven thousand will be from the Nascent Soul stage, two thousand from Spirit Severing, and one thousand from Dao Seeking! Cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.... let the trial by fire begin!"

Planet South Heaven trembled. Everyone knew that the enormous disciple recruitment trial by fire held by the Three Great Daoist Societies... was now underway!

Countless cultivators were prepared to participate. Their blood boiled at the possible good fortune in front of them. Without becoming Immortal, it was impossible to tread through the starry sky. Therefore, if they could seize this opportunity, they could have a meteoric rise, and be like a fish leaping from the sea into the heavens.

Simultaneously, similar vortexes appeared on Planet North Reed, Planet East Victory and Planet West Felicity, along with an identical voice with identical words. It was the same in the Ninth Sea and the Ninth Mountain.

Throughout all locations in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, the voice echoed out, and three vortexes appeared.

The Ninth Mountain and Sea was completely abuzz, and countless cultivators were filled with determination, and hearts that wished to search for the Dao. They flew up toward the vortexes from innumerable locations.

More than ten thousand people flew up from the lands of South Heaven alone. Most were Nascent Soul cultivators, who flew into the Nascent Soul vortex to tread the Ancient Road of the Nascent Soul. There were a smaller group who flew into the Spirit Severing vortex.

The smallest group was that which walked... the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking.

If you looked at the Ninth Mountain and Sea as a whole, it was really impossible to tell how many people tread the Ancient Roads.

This was a grand event for the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea, so the Three Great Daoist Societies, the Five Great Holy Lands and the Three Churches and Six Sects all sent people to stand guard over the three Ancient Roads.

These three roads had a long history. They might be called Ancient Roads, but in truth, they comprised an ancient set of crumbled ruins within the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Within those ruins existed uncountable good fortune, and they had supposedly existed longer than the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

In truth, the three roads were only a small portion of the larger set of ruins that the Three Great Daoist Societies exercised control over. The fact that the roads were opening now aroused ambitions in countless hearts in the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

This was especially true because... these ruins were called the Ruins of Immortality, and in the past, people had discovered Immortality Illumination Vines there. That was what had changed the entire structure of true Immortality in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Furthermore, the other eight great Mountains and Seas had similar ruins in them.

Most areas inside of the ruins were restricted areas. This was especially true in the depths of the ruins. If you entered those places, you would almost certainly die. Throughout countless years, only the most powerful of experts had ever dared to travel into the depths of the Ruins of Immortality, and virtually no one had ever emerged alive.

Rumor had it that Lord Li had traveled into the depths of the ruins, but as for what had happened there, no one knew. They only knew that the Dharma Clone he had left behind issued the Dharmic decree regarding returning fate to the Heavens.

It was because of that Dharmic decree that, in following days, Lord Ji replaced the Heavens, which in turn drew the support of most of the powers within the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

There was another rumor that in the great Nine Mountains and Seas, regardless of which Mountain or Sea, anyone who could gain enlightenment regarding the secrets of the Ruins of Immortality, would become the Overlord of all the Nine Mountains and Seas.

Although this was a generally acknowledged point, no one could actually accomplish it, not even Ksitigarbha, the Lord of the Fourth Mountain and Sea.

Now that the trial by fire had begun, countless figures vanished into the three vortexes. Fatty, Chen Fan, Wang Youcui, and others all decided to take a chance to try to get some good fortune.

As for Meng Hao, he sat cross-legged underneath a towering tree in the Fang Clan of the Eastern Lands, looking up at the three enormous vortexes. After sitting there quietly for a moment looking at the flashing vortexes, a strange light gleamed in his eyes.

“You have the Immortal Ancient Dao Medallion, so if you want to join the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite, then you don’t have to participate in the trial by fire.” The voice came from Meng Hao’s father, Fang Xiufeng, who strolled up from behind him. He stood behind Meng Hao and continued, “Furthermore, there is always the danger of perishing in the trial by fire. Aren’t you scared of that?”

“Other than the chance to join one of the Three Great Daoist Societies, is there any other good fortune to be had?” asked Meng Hao.

“Of course there is!” replied his father. “If you get first place, then you can acquire a precious treasure. Considering the resources at the Three Great Daoist Societies’ disposal, even I would be excited at the prospect of getting a magical item from them.

“Furthermore, father can tell you another secret. In addition to the founders of the Three Great Daoist Societies, the founders of the Four Great Clans, the Five Holy Lands, and the three Churches and Six Sects... all previously walked the Ancient Roads of the Ruins of Immortality!

“It was there that they acquired the unimaginable good fortune that allowed them to found their various clans and sects.

“It was the same with the Fang Clan Ancestor. That was where he acquired the bloodline that has ensured that the Fang Clan stands tall in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. That, of course, is.... the Fang Clan’s Four Lives Awakening!”

“Dad, did you go there?” asked Meng Hao.

Fang Xiufeng didn’t respond at first. After a long moment, he shook his head.

“Originally, your mother and I planned to wait for you to grow up, then we planned to take a trip there.”

When he looked at his father, Meng Hao could sense that some amount of regret existed in his heart. He glanced back up at the three vortexes, and then a gleam of determination appeared in his eyes.

“Dad, I want to go.”

“If you want to go, then go. We cultivators should never be afraid of dying!” Fang Xiufeng looked at Meng Hao, and the love in his eyes was clear, as was the look of encouragement.

“At the end of the Ancient Road are the arena matches. Actually... I hope that you do participate in this event!

“Do you know why your father’s name is known throughout the Ninth Mountain and Sea, and is even known in other Mountains and Seas? That’s because even when I was in the Spirit Realm, I never shrank from a fight with anyone in the same stage as me. I fought and killed my way to the place I am now. I passed up all the members of my same generation, suppressed them, and seized destiny. That is how to become powerful!”

“Never forget, the word cultivation 修行 is made of two characters, 修 which implies studying and practice, and 行 which implies action. It is not enough to just have 修, the studying and learning. You must also have 行, action.... You must always strive forward; that is the way to reach the pinnacle of power!”

Meng Hao coughed dryly, and a bashful smile appeared on his face.

“Dad, I can’t really identify with your path. I think... getting all of the Chosen in the Ninth Mountain and Sea to owe me money is the ideal way.”

Fang Xiufeng’s jaw dropped as Meng Hao chuckled and then flew into the air. His body flashed as he flew toward the Dao Seeking vortex. He took a deep breath, and without any further hesitation, entered.

# Chapter 842: Just a Misunderstanding....

The vortexes in the sky rotated, sending rumbling sounds echoing out in all directions. In virtually all regions of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, people were flying up into the vortexes. However, many of those people took steps to change their appearance upon entering.

They had various reasons for not wanting others to know who they truly were. After all, a grand event like this would draw the attention of the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea.

As soon as Meng Hao entered, he immediately sent some divine will out to the meat jelly. Moaning and groaning, the meat jelly helped Meng Hao to change his appearance to that of Fang Mu, from back in his days in the Violet Fate Sect.

Meng Hao was attending this event only for the trial by fire, and considering how he had flaunted his abilities in the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple on Planet South Heaven, and was now making his way alone off planet, he figured it would be much more convenient to rely on a second identity.

Furthermore, there would be no better opportunity to become famous under a second identity than this trial by fire hosted by the Three Great Daoist Societies.

“It’s too bad my second true self is temporarily incapacitated because the true Immortal’s soul was damaged by the Immortal Tribulation,” he thought. “But, that’s not such a bad thing.” Meng Hao’s eyes glittered brightly after making the transformation, and he looked out at the pitch blackness surrounding him. He could just barely make out a vortex spinning around him, with faint beams of light occasionally coming into view as they spun around him.

The sensation of being pulled along grew even stronger, and he felt increasing pressure weighing down on him.

After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, a bright light became visible up ahead in the darkness. It grew brighter and brighter,

and soon, completely enveloped Meng Hao.

When his vision grew clear once again, Meng Hao found himself looking out at a void, which was densely packed with countless platforms. Some were thirty meters wide, others, three hundred, and some three thousand.

The sizes varied, and in the center of each of the platforms was a stone stele, upon which could be seen a map. Beneath each stone stele was a candle holder. The candles were unlit, leaving the maps on the stone steles cloaked in darkness.

As for how many platforms there were, it was impossible for Meng Hao to count. His divine sense was under incredible pressure, making it impossible to send it out very far. As Meng Hao looked around, more and more people came into view. Much like Meng Hao, they stared out in shock at all the platforms.

All of them had peak Dao Seeking auras, and there were even a few who didn't quite measure up to the Chosen he had encountered before, but were very close.

They all wore different clothing, and bore different appearances. There were men and women, old and young. Some weren't even humanoid, but looked like beasts. From what Meng Hao could tell, there were several hundred in his immediate vicinity, with more and more people appearing off in the distance.

It was hard to tell who it was that flew out first, but soon, one of the three-thousand-meter platforms was occupied by a cultivator. After that, all of the cultivators who materialized in the void shot out toward the platforms at full speed. Each person who appeared occupied a single platform. Fighting broke out, but it was controlled. After all, there was no reason to unleash vicious fighting the moment they entered the Ancient Road trial by fire. It wasn't worth it.

Furthermore, any ownerless platform apparently created a bond to whoever set foot on it first, and the unlit candle would then begin to burn, illuminating the map on the stele.

As such, there wasn't very much fighting. As the saying goes, first come,

first served, so anyone who was beaten to a particular platform would quickly leave in search of another.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered. The three-hundred-meter and three-thousand-meter platforms were relatively far away from him, and the closest one to him was a thirty-meter platforms, so he quickly made his way toward that one.

However, just when he was about to step foot onto it, someone else nearby apparently had the same idea as he did. It was a tall, hulking man with ripples spreading out from beneath his feet which, if you looked closely, resembled illusory seawater that contained three swimming fish. Overall, it made the hulking man seem incredibly impressive.

He and Meng Hao were both about to step onto the platform at exactly the same time, when the hulking man snorted coldly. Killing intent flickered in his eyes.

"Screw off!" he said.

With that, his right hand made a hurling motion toward Meng Hao. The fish began to swim through the water at incredible speed, and an intense power surged out, transforming into an illusory sea dragon which shot toward Meng Hao, mouth gaping open to consume him.

Meng Hao's expression was as calm as ever, but he moved with explosive speed as he dodged past the sea dragon and then set foot onto the platform one breath of time before the hulking man.

In that instant, the candle on the platform burned to life, sending light spreading out in all directions. The hulking man's face was very unsightly as he glared at Meng Hao, and he let out a cold snort as he shot toward another nearby platform.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever, and he completely ignored the hulking man as he sat down cross-legged in front of the stone stele to examine the map. The map encompassed a huge area, but roughly ninety percent of it was covered in darkness, leaving only about ten percent clearly visible.

Within that small visible area, he could see numerous narrow roads spreading out, the origin of which was the location he was in now. The end location of all the roads was a place near the dark area on the map.

Out in the void, more and more candles were springing to life; apparently the number of platforms here was equal to the number of people who had arrived. Before long, all of the cultivators had occupied a platform.

Unfortunately, a handful of unlucky cultivators ended up dying in the fighting.

As for the hulking man from earlier, he had managed to secure a platform to the right of Meng Hao. He looked over at Meng Hao occasionally, his eyes glowing with killing intent. The spat between the two of them had obviously left him irritated.

Apparently, Meng Hao didn't notice the man, and focused intently on studying the map.

After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, everything grew quiet. Finally, an archaic voice boomed out through the void.

"I am Ling Yunzi of the Ninth Sea God World. As of now... the Dao gate has opened, and the Ancient Road stretches out. All of you must traverse the road... use it to corroborate your Dao, and to corroborate your destiny!"

1

"The road is well-lit, but is filled with danger. Any who tread it must do so with utmost caution!

"As of this moment, if you turn back, you still have a chance to retreat. But once you step forward...when you look back, there won't even be the safety of a shoreline." His voice rang out over all the platforms, filling the entire area. All of the Dao Seeking competitors in the trial by fire could hear him.

When Meng Hao heard the Ninth Sea God World mentioned, he looked up. It instantly made him think of Fan Dong'er, and he felt a bit apprehensive. He reminded himself that he had changed his appearance,

but still didn't feel any less nervous. He quietly took out the black feather the parrot had acquired, and placed it at an easily accessible location in the front of his robe.

"You may now enter the road. This is a trial by fire, and anyone with unsuitable latent talent will be eliminated first, leaving behind only the most suitable candidates.

"After that, you shall not simply walk as you wish along the road. At every stage along the way, you will be tested.

"Depending on your performance in the tests, I will arrange for you to proceed a certain number of steps. Everything you do here is visible to observers on the outside, so you need not fear that I will be unfair in my decisions.

"And now, let the first stage begin, the stage of combat!

"You may use any means fair or foul, even deadly means, to snuff out as many candles as you can in the time it takes an incense stick to burn! Anyone whose candle is snuffed out will lose the qualification to continue. Anyone who is killed will automatically be considered to have their candle extinguished!" As soon as they heard Ling Yunzi's words, all the Ninth Mountain and Sea cultivators in the Dao Seeking trial by fire felt their hearts tremble, and their killing intent exploded up.

Everyone had assumed that all participants would be allowed to enter the Ancient Road, and that the fastest one thousand among them who reached the end would be able to proceed. They had never imagined that the trial by fire would actually begin in this way.

The point of the first stage was to prevent one's candle from being extinguished, and at the same time, put out the candles of the others.

In the blink of an eye, people began sending out Dharma Clones to charge toward other platforms. Instantly, fierce fighting broke out; divine abilities and magical techniques caused everything to rumble and shake. The entire area was thrown into chaos, and roaring filled the ears of everyone present. It only took a moment before screams of death rang out.

Even as Meng Hao's eyes began to glitter coldly, the hulking man off to his right who had been glancing at him murderously gave a vicious laugh and waved his right hand. Instantly, a Feng Shui compass flew out, which then transformed into a glittering spell formation that spread out to protect his candle. Then the man flew out toward Meng Hao.

"I've killed lots of peak Dao Seeking experts," he said. "Since you dared to compete with me, then you'll be the first person I kill in this trial by fire!" The illusory seawater swelled beneath his feet as he stepped onto Meng Hao's platform. He quickly performed an incantation gesture, causing a sea dragon to roar toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao was sitting cross-legged next to the candle, and when he looked up his face was calm. There wasn't even a cold gleam visible in his eyes. He looked placidly over at the hulking man, then waved his hand through the air in a snatching motion. Shockingly, the Star Plucking Magic was unleashed.

The first thing that it grabbed was the sea dragon, which was completely incapable of fighting back, and although it struggled for a moment, Meng Hao simply pinched his fingers together, and it collapsed into pieces. The hulking man's eyes widened; he was well aware that the sea dragon had materialized with roughly eighty percent of his total power. Normally speaking, there were few peak Dao Seeking experts in the Ninth Sea who could possibly evade this sea dragon.

However, he had just watched as his opponent casually waved a hand and crushed it to pieces. In that instant, the hulking man's scalp went numb, and he was very nearly scared out of his mind.

"Not good!" he thought. "Don't tell me this is one of those inhuman freaks from one of the sects or clans? Impossible! I've seen all of those people from afar, but I've never laid eyes on this guy before!"

The man's face fell, and he immediately cried out with a loud voice: "Misunderstanding! Fellow Daoist, this was just a misunderstanding...."

As he spoke, he retreated at top speed. However, Meng Hao's Star Plucking Magic bore down on him and snatched up him. The hulking

man's face filled with fear, but Meng Hao's was expressionless as he gently squeezed down.

Boom!

Before the hulking man could even let out a bloodcurdling scream, his body was crushed into pieces, and he was destroyed in spirit and body. When he died, his candle immediately snuffed out.

After making his deadly attack, Meng Hao pointed toward the Feng Shui compass that covered the hulking man's candle. It trembled, and was just about to fly back toward Meng Hao when a black beam flew toward it. The beam turned into a black-robed youth, who reached out to grab the Feng Shui compass.

However, almost as soon as his hand latched onto the item, Meng Hao's cold snort echoed out. When it entered the young man's ears, he began to tremble violently, and subconsciously looked over at Meng Hao. When their gazes locked, his mind filled with a roaring sound.

To him, Meng Hao's gaze felt like two sharp swords, stabbing into his eyes and threatening to slash his mind into pieces, stabbing into his brain and down into his soul.

The young man's face fell, and he coughed up a huge mouthful of blood. His face was pale, and he ceased all attempts to grab the Feng Shui compass.

"Fellow Daoist!!" he cried urgently in a raspy voice. "Pardon my offense!"

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1. Ling Yunzi's name in Chinese is 凌云子 líng yún zǐ – Ling is a surname which also means “rise high.” Yun means “cloud,” and Zi means “son” or “child.” Also, 凌云 is a word which means “soar to the skies.” Therefore, his name contains a bit of clever wordplay.

# Chapter 843: Fight For Supremacy, the Entire Way!

Meng Hao didn't immediately slaughter the young man. He calmly beckoned with his hand, causing the Feng Shui compass to fly over and settle onto his hand. Because the hulking man was dead, the item was currently masterless, so after Meng Hao sent some divine sense into it, it was branded to him.

"It's definitely mysterious," he said, "but unfortunately, not very powerful." He waved his hand again, causing two ultra high-grade spirit stones to fly out from his dwindling collection. He pushed them onto the Feng Shui compass before their aura could spread out and be detected.

In the blink of an eye, the Feng Shui compass changed. Although it looked normal, it now exerted a spell formation which was far mightier than it had been before. It was worlds apart. Meng Hao quickly placed it down next to him, whereupon its glow spread out to cover the candle.

"Unless someone like Taiyang Zi or one of the other Chosen show up, this should hold out for the time it takes an incense stick to burn. Ordinary peak Dao Seeking cultivators won't be able to break through it." He rose to his feet and looked around. By now, half of the time was already gone, and he had only extinguished one candle. There were others off in the distance who had snuffed out seven or eight. Perhaps some people even further off had extinguished even more.

In the same moment that Meng Hao left his platform, people in the outside world, in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, were looking up at what had once been merely swirling vortexes, but now contained enormous viewing screens.

Those screens displayed everything that was happening on the Ancient Roads, although the images were very small. Of course, if one's cultivation base was high enough, it was still possible to clearly see each and every individual despite how small they were on the screen.

Countless people in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were watching the screens. There were people from the Three Great Daoist Societies, the Four Great Clans, the Five Holy Lands, and the Three Churches and Six Sects, as well as various powerful rogue cultivators.

The various sects were paying especially close attention. They were not clans, and therefore had to recruit disciples from outside. Therefore, they would be paying close attention to the trial by fire. Many would not wait until the end of the event was reached, but would select disciples to recruit throughout the process.

Of course, numerous conversations could be heard among the crowds throughout the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

“The Three Great Daoist Societies have created ten stages within the three Ancient Roads in the Ruins of Immortality. Each stage involves a different test, which will allow them to slowly filter out the competitors, and leave behind only the future Chosen.”

“It’s possible that some of the people who get eliminated might have great potential, but were just unluckily knocked out.”

“Look, the current leader on the Ancient Road of the Nascent Soul has already extinguished 39 candles. Although the Nascent Soul cultivators’ cultivation bases aren’t very high, they have an intense will to fight!”

“The highest number of extinguished candles on the Ancient Road of Spirit Severing is 27!”

“Who is that masked young man on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking...? He’s already extinguished 19 candles!”

“The Ancient Road of Dao Seeking is the most interesting after all. See that one guy? He’s probably a disciple of the Li Clan. He’s changed his appearance, but you can recognize who he is from the divine abilities he’s using. He’s already put out 15 candles.”

Even as the discussions were going on outside, Meng Hao flew out toward a thirty-meter platform on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking. As soon as he set foot on it, an enraged roar echoed out, and an old man with

disheveled hair appeared. A will of madness radiated out as he charged toward Meng Hao.

"Die!" he cried, performing an incantation gesture that caused a fissure to appear, which then transformed into a broadsword!

"Void Severing!" he cried, causing some others in the area to look over in shock and then backpedal. Meng Hao turned, his expression calm as he gazed at the incoming Void Severing attack. He did not retreat, but instead utilized the Golden Roc Transformation. At the same time, he used the powers of the black feather inside his robe so that the golden roc actually looked like a pitch-black vulture instead.

The vulture sped through the air toward the incoming Void Severing attack. When they slammed into each other, a huge boom echoed out, and the Void Severing blade collapsed, completely incapable of fazing Meng Hao in the slightest. When the old man saw this, his face filled with shock, and he fell back. However, before he could get very far, a blast of wind gusted against him as Meng Hao swooped down in vulture form. Claws slashed out, and a splattering sound could be heard as the man's head was crushed.

This was a trial by fire, a fight for good fortune. If you didn't kill your opponent, your opponent would kill you.

Meng Hao had experienced much gory brutality, so he was used to things like this. He wouldn't allow such a thing to affect him inwardly. When the old man died, his candle went out, and Meng Hao proceeded to the next platform. If nobody blocked his path, he would merely extinguish the candle; if people tried to kill him, he would return the favor and end their lives.

In a brief moment, Meng Hao swept across the entire area. No one could offer any resistance for longer than the space of a single breath, and ended either with a death, or an extinguished candle.

Meng Hao proceeded along as if he were walking across dried up weeds, his intense energy allowing him to rapidly rise up above the others.

Three candles. Four candles. Five candles....

Meng Hao attacked viciously and decisively. Currently, of the dozen or so people in his vicinity, there were four or five who were concealing their cultivation bases. When Meng Hao attacked them, their power exploded out; although none of them seemed to be on the level of Taiyang Zi and the other Chosen, they still possessed unique and exceptional divine abilities.

There was even one person who controlled powers which resembled those of Lu Bai, the Chosen from the Northern Reaches who used a Time divine ability. When this person attacked, he could seemingly lock down space and time in shocking fashion.<sup>1</sup>

Any other peak Dao Seeking expert who went up against people like this, especially the one who could control space-time, would most certainly perish. However, Meng Hao possessed eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal, and could even eradicate false Immortals. Each and every attack he made either killed someone, or snuffed out a candle. Booms rattled out constantly.

The only time he didn't instantly attack with lethal force was when he faced the old man who could control Time. After a bit of observation, he realized that this Dao of Time was the same type he had gone up against when he fought Lu Bai. At the time, it had definitely tantalized him, but was something that until now he still couldn't quite understand no matter how much he contemplated it.

When he attacked, he paid close attention to the results. Considering he had eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal, he was able to pick up some clues. As they fought, the old man grew more and more shocked, until finally he was virtually scared witless. From his view, he was fighting what appeared to be an ordinary youth, one that still somehow appeared to be analyzing and even imitating his Dao of Time. At a certain point he even seemed to be utilizing some of the same power, which left the old man completely shocked.

"Inhuman! This guy must definitely be one of those legendary Chosen!!" The old man's heart trembled, and it was without hesitation that he suddenly extinguished his own candle to ensure that he could continue to

live.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered in response to the old man's decisiveness, and he made no further attacks. After the candle went out, he gave the old man a glance and simply teleported past him and continued onward.

Roughly a third of the amount of time it takes an incense stick to burn remained, and Meng Hao had already extinguished 19 candles!

Most of the platforms in the area were empty. As for the people whose candles were extinguished but who were not killed, one by one, they faded and were teleported away by the power of the Ancient Road, having lost any qualifications to continue with the trial by fire.

Many people were shocked by this; it didn't matter if you died or simply lost the qualifications, you were eliminated either way. This was a heavy blow to anyone who had placed high hopes in coming here and skating through some of the tests.

"So that Dao of Time is similar to the power of Time that I wield. There are similarities, but they're actually different!" Meng Hao's eyes were calm, but a thoughtful flicker could be seen in his pupils. The battle just now had not been short, and Meng Hao had actually benefited quite a bit. 2

As of now, he stood on one of the platforms, and his eyes swept about the area. Finally, his body flickered and he flew off in a different direction.

It was at this point that the archaic voice of the Ninth Sea God World's Ling Yunzi suddenly echoed out again.

"Of that one incense stick's worth of time, there are now less than one hundred breaths of time left.... After those one hundred breaths of time, the first stage will be complete. Those of you who extinguish the most candles during that time, and also prevent your own candle from being extinguished, will receive a special reward!"

This announcement caused the entire Ancient Road of Dao Seeking to boil with excitement. Similar announcements were made on the Ancient Road of the Nascent Soul and the Ancient Road of Spirit Severing. The participating cultivators' killing intent immediately soared upward.

Meanwhile, in the outside world, vast crowds were paying close attention to the three screens visible in the giant vortexes. The Ancient Road of the Nascent Soul was a mass of chaos. On the Ancient Road of Spirit Severing, the fighting was more orderly.

The Ancient Road of Dao Seeking was unique. On the screen, what was clearly visible were over ten thousand locations in which a powerful expert had completely cleared out all of the candles nearby, making something like a vacuum for themselves.

Of those ten thousand or so areas, some were large and some were small. However, if you could rise above the field of competitors like an awl poking through a sack, it proved that you were a powerful expert. Soon, the experts began to fight among themselves.

"There's already someone who's extinguished seventy candles on the Dao Seeking road!"

"There's not much time left! This trial by fire is completely brutal! So many people have already been eliminated!"

The outside world was abuzz. Back on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking, many people were so agitated that their eyes were completely red. Some were attacking with deadly force, and some had already made significant achievements and were just stalling, waiting for time to run out. Meng Hao looked around, then barreled into a nearby area where eight people were all fighting each other at the same time. All of these people were powerful experts who had already cleared out the other nearby areas.

Shockingly, one of them was a fierce pangolin, a wild beast whose bright eyes revealed that it was no less intelligent than any human.

There was also a woman whose body appeared to be young, but whose face was covered with wrinkles. A pink, illusory image, which was clearly the early form of a Dharma Idol, could be seen behind her.

All of these seven or eight people fought with vicious attacks that sent booms rattling out in all directions. However, none of them seemed capable of overcoming the others, and in fact, some of them appeared to have joined forces.

As soon as Meng Hao neared, they looked over at him. None of them knew him, nor each other; they were all from different locations in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. They were here to fight for good fortune, so the instant they saw Meng Hao, the pangolin flashed through the air as it charged toward him. A few of the others also charged Meng Hao, their eyes flashing.

“No matter how much we fight, we can’t overcome each other! Instead of wasting time fighting each other, let’s go kill some other people! The good fortune will go to whoever is lucky enough to land the killing blow!”

“Yeah! This guy showed up here after us. His battle prowess is obviously ordinary, otherwise he would have already wiped everyone in his own region out!”

“He’s just unlucky! Kill him!”

The seven or eight people charged with killing intent in their eyes. Of course, despite their words, they were still on guard against each other. They might seem to have joined forces to attack someone else, but that didn’t mean they were any less likely to attack each other.

As the eight people closed in, Meng Hao’s expression was calm, and he stopped in place. There were now less than 61 breaths of time left before the conclusion of this stage; time was running out quickly.

In the blink of an eye, the eight people were upon him. The pangolin’s numerous scales lifted up as a divine ability rumbled out, seemingly powerful enough to break apart a mountain. The woman also waved her hand, causing a pink aura to spread out behind her, which transformed into a pink skull.

The others also unleashed various divine abilities as each and every one leveled astonishing attacks.

Meng Hao looked on calmly, then clenched his right hand into a fist and punched out toward them through the void.

When the punch landed, an indescribable blast rose up, sweeping across the eight attackers. Their faces fell as Meng Hao made his move!

1. Lu Bai was introduced in chapter 720 and appeared in several following chapters. He and Meng Hao entered the world underneath the Ancient Dao Lakes, and he was last seen trying to fight his way up the tower as Meng Hao left.
2. The abilities of Lu Bai (and this old man) are described with different Chinese characters than the power that Meng Hao uses. However, both have the same meaning, “Time.” The characters of Meng Hao’s “Time powers” carry more of a sense of “years” as in aging.

# Chapter 844: First Place in the First Stage!

He transformed into a wind. A whirlwind!

The intense whirlwind swept out in all directions through the void, filled with crackling lightning. It was like a windstorm that swept across everything as it shot toward the incoming eight cultivators.

When the windstorm hit them, their divine abilities were shaken, and their expressions became that of shock. Their hearts trembled with astonishment. All of these people had slaughtered their way out of their own respective zones among the platforms, and were essentially the strongest people from those areas. In the outside world, they could be completely domineering in all the Spirit Realm, to the point where it was even difficult for them to outdo each other.

No one had ever been able to stand up to them, or outdo them in terms of power. And yet, Meng Hao's one punch left them feeling as if they had run into a windstorm.

This was a windstorm they couldn't fight back against nor resist. This windstorm... contained the might of Heaven and Earth, limitless destructive power that could rip them to pieces as easily as dried up twigs!

This was... a completely and thoroughly crushing power!

Intense rumbling rose up, and the whirlwind screamed, filled with never-ending bolts of lightning as it hurtled at top speed toward the eight cultivators. The eight cultivators' minds filled with roaring sounds, and intense light. The incredible scene instantly drew the attention of other people on the larger battlefield.

In that moment, everyone outside in the Ninth Mountain and Sea who was watching the trial by fire stared fixedly at the three vortex screens.

On the Ancient Road of the Nascent Soul, massive carnage was visible. The Ancient Road of Spirit Severing was similar. Fatty could be seen there, soaked in blood, roaring as he pounced forward to latch his teeth onto the neck of an enemy. His eyes were bloodshot, and his teeth glittered

brightly. He howled as his opponent's candle was extinguished.

Even Fatty didn't realize how ferocious, and even savage, he appeared. He had already drawn the attention of quite a few sects.

Then there were Chen Fan, Wang Youcai, Li Shiqi, and others who Meng Hao knew from the lands of South Heaven. They were all on the Ancient Road of the Nascent Soul. Some died, some were disqualified, others... fought until the very end!

Chen Fen held a sword in his hand. His expression was gloomy, seemingly without the slightest bit of life in it whatsoever. He seemed empty and dark, which affected his attacks, causing them to be filled with a similar gloominess. However, a black aura swirled around his sword, and anyone who encountered it would feel their emotions suddenly being affected. Therefore, Chen Fan was also distinguishing himself on the Ancient Road of the Nascent Soul, and drawing quite a bit of attention.

Fatty and Chen Fan had both been noticed, as had many others. This was merely the beginning of the event, and if they could continue to perform so stunningly, or even take first place on the Ancient Road of the Nascent Soul, then they would definitely have a chance at good fortune.

Of course, what drew the most attention was the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking. The fighting there had given rise to a foul wind and a bloody rain and, having come to its most critical juncture, was definitely the focal point for most of the audience.

It was easy to see the contrast with the chaos of the Ancient Roads of the Nascent Soul and Spirit Severing. The Ancient Road of Dao Seeking was filled with a shocking murderous aura. Of the previous ten thousand or more areas, each one was now controlled by a single powerful expert, all of whom were now fighting each other viciously as they attempted to extinguish each others' candles.

Victory or defeat was determined within the space of a few breaths in battles like that, and soon, massive changes to the situation on the battlefield could be seen.

"93 candles extinguished! Who is that? I've never seen anything like it!!"

“Look at that guy in the mask! He’s put out more than almost anyone else. He’s the first to extinguish more than 100!”

“Look, the Chosen from the Li Clan has extinguished more than 100 too!”

Everyone was in an uproar, and was crying out loudly.

“200! The person in first place has put out 200 candles!!”

“Things are happening too fast! The suspense is killing me! The guy with the mask, he’s... he’s... he’s actually exceeded 300!!”

“He’s the only one who’s exceeded 300. The next four people behind him have around 200 or more. Those five are definitely the most powerful people in this stage!”

“Time’s almost up!”

The sound of the uproar filled the air.

Back on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking, there were five people who had attracted the most attention from the other cultivators. The cultivators from the Three Sects and Six Churches, the Five Great Holy Lands, and the Three Great Daoist Societies watched the vortex screens, eyes filled with strange gleams. All five of those people shared something in common....

They stood completely alone in their respective areas, surrounded by emptiness!

Of those five people, the most prominent was the young man wearing the pitch-black mask. His black hair floated around him, and he wore a black robe. He looked almost like a shadow, and he exuded a cold, desolate and deadly aura.

His attacks were incisive, and he didn’t even seem to use any divine abilities. The simple wave of a finger would cause the divine will of other peak Dao Seeking cultivators to be destroyed, and their Nascent Divinities would be shattered and perish.

There was another person among the five, a young woman. She wore a

gauzy violet gown that made her look like the flower of the same name. Her face was obscured by some unknown technique, making it impossible to tell exactly what she looked like. She seemed charming and gentle, but attacked with complete ruthlessness. She was surrounded by countless violet flower petals, and upon each one could be seen a drop of blood. It was an astonishing sight.

The third among the group of five was a boy. He was skinny and virtually hairless, but possessed of remarkable speed. Furthermore, his body was covered with countless blue-colored decorative patterns that looked like sealing marks, which appeared to have formed naturally, as opposed to having been added later.

He exuded a wild and barbaric aura that he concealed as best he could; however as his blood flowed through his veins, the aura seeped out, and it made him seem like he wasn't a cultivator, but rather some savage beast from the wilderness.

The fourth person was a middle-aged man. His expression was cold and haughty, and he wore a white robe. He was surrounded by a cloud of brown mosquitos, each one of them the size of a fist. Their mouthparts were long and pointed, and buzzing could be heard as they circled around him. The sight was enough to cause anyone's scalp to go numb.

The mosquitos' bright red eyes and savage bloodthirsty appearance left everyone trembling from fear.

The fifth person was extremely peculiar. Sometimes he looked old, sometimes he looked middle-aged, and sometimes he looked like a teenager. It was as if his age were in constant flux. Every time he changed, his battle prowess would surge; he clearly cultivated some strange and bizarre Daoist magic.

These five people were currently the focus of most of the attention on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking. Each one of them had extinguished more than 200 candles, and the masked young man had put out more than 300.

Ranked behind them were many other Chosen who weren't the focus of

as much attention. However, this was only the first stage, so it was really impossible to say how things would turn out in the end.

“There are less than thirty breaths of time left!!”

“These people are the mightiest amongst the mighty! With only thirty breaths of time left, it would be hard to change the outcome. The first stage is essentially over! The results are set!” Most people were thinking this way. Even the cultivators from the major sects felt the same way.

It seemed like time was about to expire, but just at this moment the whirlwind created by Meng Hao’s fist swept over the eight people who were attacking him.

“Impossible!” cried the woman. Her eyes shone with disbelief, and she performed a double-handed incantation in an attempt to fight back. All of the power she could muster transformed into a mist that blocked the windstorm. However, the mist was instantly shattered, and the woman let out a bloodcurdling scream as she first began to vibrate and then was ripped to shreds by the windstorm, destroyed in spirit and body.

The windstorm spread out, accompanied by her shriek. Three more people went all out with their cultivation bases, and yet were incapable of standing up to the crushing power of the windstorm. Popping sounds rang out as they were exterminated.

The remaining four people were scared out of their minds, and wanted to flee, but couldn’t. The windstorm surrounded them, and the shadow of death loomed up. Their original intent was to slaughter Meng Hao, but his deadly counterattack left them trembling, minds filled with terror.

They were about to plead for mercy, but the windstorm overwhelmed them. Two of them had no time to even speak, and were shattered into fragments. Their candles winked out.

“I refuse to accept this!” roared the beast cultivator, the pangolin. His fleshly body was the most powerful among them, but even he could only hold out for a single extra breath of time before his scales were ripped off and his flesh shredded by the windstorm. In an instant, he was nothing more than a skeleton.

All eight cultivators were dead!

In that moment, Meng Hao's count of extinguished candles broke past the 100 mark and began to climb toward 200!

The windstorm did not fade away. Meng Hao remained in the center position, his expression calm as he punched downward three more times. Then he took a deep breath and punched another three more times.

Rumbling filled the air as the windstorm experienced a threefold increase in size. Massive amounts of lightning crackled about, and the sound of thunder was deafening. The gigantic windstorm swept out in all directions, and reached a size of 3,000 meters in the following ten breaths of time.

By now, even the people on the outside world had noticed the enormous, lightning-filled windstorm on the vortex-screens.

“What’s that?!?!”

“I didn’t notice that before! Where did that huge windstorm come from?!?”

“Heavens! That windstorm is still growing!!”

It wasn’t just the crowds who were now paying attention to the windstorm. Even Ling Yunzi from the Ninth Sea God World was eying it. By now, there were only three breaths of time left before the first stage ended!

Three. Two! One!!

Boom! BOOM!! BOOOMMM!!

In the same instant in which the stage concluded, Meng Hao’s windstorm spread out to a size of 30,000 meters! Simultaneously, it exploded, accompanied by numerous miserable shrieks, cries of alarm, and roars of defiance.

Furthermore, the number of candles listed next to Meng Hao’s name rose rapidly!

200!

300!

400!

500!!

All of the cultivators caught up in the enormous 30,000-meter windstorm were completely wiped out. In the blink of an eye, the entire area of the windstorm was swept completely clean. The only person remaining... was Meng Hao. He stood in the middle of the windstorm, his hair whipping about, his expression calm. However, even the outside audience could sense that deep within the calmness was a vicious ruthlessness.

In that instant, the entire Ancient Road of Dao Seeking went completely quiet. The audience outside stared at the vortex screens, eyes wide with disbelief at the sight of Meng Hao standing there, surrounded by complete emptiness.

He had come up from behind at the last minute to clinch first place in the first stage!

# Chapter 845: Rising Star!

As of this moment, all eyes were on Meng Hao!

It wasn't just the people watching in the outside world. The remaining cultivators on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking couldn't help but look over at Meng Hao. Although everyone was separated by large distances, within the void of the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking he was the only one who had been able to clear out everyone within 30,000 meters. The sight was enough to shock everyone.

Even the person who had previously been in first place, the masked young man, had only been able to clear an area around 20,000 meters wide to call his own.

As of now, the high-level members of the Three Sects and Six Churches, the Five Great Holy Lands, and even the Four Great Clans, were all inwardly shaken. Their eyes glittered brightly, and many voices could be heard.

"Use any means necessary to send that man a message. Whatever his requirements are, get him to join the Burning Incense Stick Society!"

"Getting first in the rankings during the first stage doesn't say too much. There are quite a few more stages to go, so there will certainly be others who rise to prominence. I'm afraid the person who came in second place won't be shown much interest at the moment. However... the first place winner, even if he doesn't do well in the following stages, showed such amazing strength in the first stage that we, the Church of the Immortal Emperor, must have him as a disciple! Send word down immediately!"

"His battle prowess is astonishing, and his temperament ruthless. A person like that is perfectly suitable to join us in the Church of the Blood Orchid!!"

Quite a few of the powers who made up the Three Churches and Six Sects were instantly attracted to Meng Hao because of his flashy display of power.

As for the Five Great Holy Lands, the Four Great Clans, and the Three Great Daoist Societies, although they were astonished, none made any such proclamations. However, they definitely looked at him differently than the others.

Also watching the Ancient Roads on the vortex screens were Meng Hao's parents. They were in the Fang Clan in the vast Eastern Lands, looking up at the spectacle. Meng Hao might have changed appearances, but Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li could still recognize him instantly.

When they saw that he had taken first place in the first stage, both of them smiled. They were smiles filled with pride and anticipation. Of course, Meng Hao's mother's smile also contained a bit of concern. However, she knew that Meng Hao's path... was his own to tread.

In the Kunlun Society, Grandmaster Pill Demon was watching the Dao Seeking vortex screen. Although nobody else might recognize Meng Hao, how could Pill Demon not be able to identify that person who had once been called Fang Mu?

Chu Yuyan stood next to Pill Demon, looking on silently. There were emotions in her heart which she would never be able or even willing to forget. After all this time, she had grown used to watching Meng Hao from a distance.

She was Pill Demon's apprentice, but in the Kunlun Society, Pill Demon had been directly accepted as Daoist Kunlun's apprentice, and had instantly become a blazing sun. Because of that, Chu Yuyan also had a unique position. It only took a short time for her to become acquainted with many of the Chosen there. Furthermore, because of her incredible beauty, countless Kunlun Society disciples began to pursue her.

Her worldview was now completely different. There was no sky above her head now, but rather, stars. What she saw when she looked around were not towering mountains, but rather, a sea of heavenly bodies.

Despite all of that, though, the memories of everything that had happened on Planet South Heaven were etched deep into her soul.

The first stage was over. Vast numbers of competitors had been eliminated from the Ancient Roads of the Nascent Soul, Spirit Severing, and Dao Seeking. Those who had made it through now waited for the second stage, exhausted and anxious.

Next, archaic voices spoke out in the three different Ancient Roads. The words spoken were different, but the meaning was the same, as the voice notified everyone that the first stage was over, and at the same time... announced how many steps each competitor would be able to take!

"Those who extinguished fifty candles or less in the first stage may go forward 3,000 paces! One hundred candles or less, 5,000 paces!

"Two hundred candles or less, 7,000 paces. Three hundred candles or less, 9,000 paces... Five hundred candles, 10,000 paces!" For the first time, Ling Yunzi of the Ninth Sea God World appeared personally in the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking. He was thin, and wore a long green robe. He had white eyebrows, and a blue mark could be seen on his forehead that seemed to contain an entire ocean!

He stood there, his aura pulsing with monstrous power, as if he himself were made of a sea of stars!

Shockingly, the illusory image of a nine-headed sea dragon could be seen behind him. Although it was illusory, when Meng Hao looked at it, he felt as if he were looking at some celestial force.

Ling Yunzi could be considered one of the top most powerful experts in the whole Ninth Mountain and Sea!

His eyes swept the area, lingering for a moment on Meng Hao.

After he finished speaking, Ling Yunzi waved his sleeve, causing everyone in the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking to disappear as they moved forward beyond their own control, traveling an exact amount of steps in accord with the explanation that had just been provided.

Step by step, they advanced, encountering no candles or platforms along their way. They floated through the void until they reached a stretch of endless ruins. The crumbled remains of buildings could be seen, as well as

ancient statues, dried up forests, rivers, and mountain ranges.

They were now in... the Ninth Mountain and Sea's Ruins of Immortality.

The void they had just been in was simply the entrance!

The only words that could be used to describe this area were: lifeless, archaic, ancient, mysterious, silent, and enormous!

Those were the six words that floated in the minds of all the competitors as they laid eyes on the Ruins of Immortality for the first time. The last word was actually the most prominent feeling that they experienced.

It was almost impossible to tell that this was a road of any sort. The one thing that stood out were the countless altars that stretched off in a line off into the distance. They seemed to be filled with an air of time, an ancientness. They were carved with complex magical symbols that were impossible for anyone to understand. The altars further off in the distance were covered even more thickly with magical symbols than the nearer ones, and gave off an air of incredible mystery.

If you had to call this place a road, then perhaps... the way the altars stretched out made the shape of that road visible.

It was impossible to tell how many altars there were; they extended out endlessly off into the distance.

Upon first glance, the altars didn't seem very big. However... they were actually incredibly enormous. In fact, the smallest of them were about thirty percent of the size of the entire void they had just been in.

Each and every one of the altars was simply gargantuan!

From this, it can be imagined how shocking the Ruins of Immortality were. From the feeling Meng Hao got, it was as if this place had not been constructed for use by cultivators, but rather, by some enormous race of giants.

But then, he suddenly changed his mind as he thought back to... what he had seen in the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple in the mountains in the Eastern Lands. In his vision, he had seen many things that seemed to

indicate that many such things existed ancient times. Perhaps giants and cultivators were actually one and the same.

The group that stopped at 3,000 paces was relatively small. They all ended up on one of the altars, and there was no crowding whatsoever. The largest group was made up of those who could go 5,000 paces. Despite the large number of people, each person still had a large area to call their own on that particular altar.

Next were those who could move 7,000 paces. There were fewer in that group, and they quickly spread out across the altar, eyeing each other.

When it came to 9,000 paces, there was only the masked young man and the person who could change his age. Currently, he had changed from being an old man to being young. He and the masked youth shared one enormous altar.

As for Meng Hao, he was the last person to come to a stop, in the lead position. He was the only person to occupy an entire altar all by himself!

Similar scenes were playing out on the Ancient Roads of the Nascent Soul and Spirit Severing.

“The second stage, is the stage of killing!” said Ling Yunzi, his voice cold.

“The first stage was a test of your ability to engage in magical combat. Cultivators practice cultivation to be able to fight. We fight people, we fight the Heavens, we fight Earth. Only by fighting can we hew out a Heaven-defying destiny!

“This second stage of killing tests exactly how powerful you are in the Dao Seeking stage!

“This stage seems similar to the first stage, but is actually very different. In the first stage, you all fought different opponents. Some were weak and some were strong. There was no way to objectively determine exactly how powerful you are.

“In the second stage, you will all be fighting exactly the same enemy!

“To us cultivators, the Dao is of utmost importance. Our magics are

prepared to protect our Daos. Without sufficient magic, how can we achieve our Dao? Therefore, all of you must unleash all the power you can in this second stage!

"In this stage, the time limit will again be set at one incense stick. This test is not regarding the number of fatalities you can inflict, but rather... how fast you can kill!"

"Kill everything that you see. Anyone who cannot complete the task in the time it takes one incense stick to burn will be eliminated. In this second stage, your lives will be at risk. If you wish, you may turn and leave of your own volition right now!" Ling Yunzi's eyes swept across the crowd, but no one chose to withdraw. His expression cold, he swished his sleeve, and immediately, the magical symbols on the altars began to shine brightly. Rumbling filled the air, and brilliant light swirled everywhere.

The light quickly spread out to cover the entirety of each altar, completely enveloping each and every person.

1,000 paces behind Meng Hao, the masked young man stood there, staring at Meng Hao as the light enveloped him. His eyes shone with a fierce gleam as he watched Meng Hao disappearing.

"You won the first stage, but the second stage will not belong to you!"

The old man with the age-changing ability was now a teenager, and his eyes shone with a similar light.

Behind them were all the other contenders who had earned top marks in the first stage. Each one was looking at Meng Hao's disappearing figure, their eyes filled with stubborn gleams.

"Earlier, he obviously used some trick at the last minute. This time... he'll be forced to show his true colors!"

At the same time, on the Ancient Roads of the Nascent Soul and Spirit Severing, everyone was also being covered up by the brilliant light. Soon no one was visible at all, and the only thing that could be seen within the glowing light was a list of names.

After each name was a number that indicated how many fatalities they

had inflicted.

Back on Meng Hao's altar, a cold voice suddenly rang out in his ear asking his name. Meng Hao's face flickered slightly, and after muttering to himself for a moment, he responded with "Fang Mu."

In the blink of an eye, the characters Fang Mu 方木 appeared in the altar's light. Immediately, everyone in the Ninth Mountain and Sea could see it.

"His name is Fang Mu!!"

"Could it be possible that he's connected to the Fang Clan? Although, there are tons of people surnamed Fang who aren't connected to the Fang Clan."

"Fang Mu. Fang Mu.... He got first place in the first stage, I wonder how he'll perform in the second stage...."

"Don't think too much of it. There's no way somebody could take first place in the first stage and then again in the second stage. I suspect that he used some sort of forbidden Daoist Magic at the very last minute. Otherwise, he would never have come to the fore in the first stage. That's why he suddenly jumped into the spotlight at the last minute."

"Be that as it may, if he takes first place again, it would be totally Heaven-defying. The sects would be thrown into an uproar!"

# Chapter 846: Fastest!

The three Ancient Roads were filled with splendorous light that covered everyone. The only thing visible were the lists of names, some of which were real and some assumed.

Soon, the only thing Meng Hao could see was bright light, and then everything around him changed, even the sky; the altar seemed to become a massive, glowing spell formation. It didn't last for very long, only the space of a few breaths of time, and then the light vanished.

Everything around him had changed. There was no sky up above, only stars. There was no ground beneath his feet, only a gigantic 3,000-meter long ancient beast!

It was an enormous python, completely pitch-black in color, its body covered with scars and wounds. It was even possible to see its bones in some places, and in other locations, you could see all the way through its entire body.

It appeared to be just on the verge of death, its life force fading, with barely enough energy left to even fly. Although it seemed to be just barely clinging to life, there was still a terrifying aura surrounding it, the power of which shocked even Meng Hao. Were it to explode out, even a true Immortal would likely be killed by the blast.

Meng Hao was standing on the head of the ancient python, and it appeared to be connected to him, as if he could control it.

After staring in shock for a moment, Meng Hao looked down to find that he was wearing a suit of armor. The armor seemed brand new, and it radiated a mild energy. Overall, he seemed to physically be in this place, but at the same time, his body also seemed to be illusory. Furthermore, up ahead of him was a planet!

It was much, much smaller than Planet South Heaven, and in fact, might not even have been large enough to actually call a planet. Perhaps it was nothing more than a large asteroid. It also seemed completely unstable, filled with chaos.

Almost as soon as Meng Hao laid eyes on the black planet, innumerable dots of light appeared that looked like eyes. All of the eyes opened and looked straight at Meng Hao.

An intense sense of crisis filled Meng Hao, and his mind trembled. Suddenly, whistling sounds could be heard, and, astonishingly, one thousand beams of light shot toward Meng Hao from the planet.

Figures could be seen within these beams of light, figures that weren't cultivators, but rather, puppets!

Meng Hao was not the only one to be seeing this. Each and every one of the cultivators on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking was in a unique world of their own. What they were seeing and experiencing was exactly the same as Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered coldly, and he didn't instantly spring into action. Instead, he took advantage of the time it would take for his opponents to reach him, to further study the ancient python. It appeared to be severely wounded, and on the verge of death, although it clearly had the power to make one final attack.

Such an attack would surely leave the beast completely dead in spirit and body. However, that final attack would surely be shocking, that much Meng Hao could tell.

He frowned and sent his divine sense out, then sighed. All of the puppets flying out from the planet had peak Dao Seeking auras, though not one of them was comparable to a false Immortal.

Just then, however, five auras suddenly exploded out from the planet, five auras that were all of the false Immortal stage. If that were all there were to it, it wouldn't be a big deal. But in that moment, yet another aura, even stronger than the others, exploded out.

The planet shook, and ripples spread out in all directions. The energy rose up, growing more and more powerful. It was very similar to the asteroid-like planet, completely filled with a will of chaos and madness.

Meng Hao's face sank, and his eyes widened....

It was a true Immortal!!

“One thousand puppets, five false Immortals, and one true Immortal...so this is the trial by fire?

“According to what Ling Yunzi said, I’m supposed to kill all of these enemies within the time it takes an incense stick to burn. That’s the only way to pass this stage. Ordinary attack methods would never be able to accomplish such a thing.”

Meng Hao muttered to himself as the more than one thousand puppets whistled ever closer to him.

“There’s no way that this trial by fire will eliminate almost all the competitors in only the second stage....” Meng Hao’s eyes flickered as he looked down at the ancient python beneath his feet.

“This ancient beast is powerful.... The last attack it makes before dying will be powerful enough to kill all those thousand peak Dao Seeking puppets. Or, if I wait a bit, I could kill the five false Immortals with it. If I wait until the very end to use it, then I could kill the true Immortal.

“I only have one shot....

“That’s the choice we competitors are being given!” The light of understanding flashed in his eyes.

In the various other worlds in which the cultivators on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking all faced the same scenario, everyone was hesitating regarding how to stick out from the crowd. There were many Chosen hidden among the competitors, and they were all intelligent people. It only took them a moment to come to the exact same conclusion Meng Hao had about the crux of this stage.

The masked young man looked out with flickering eyes. Without hesitation, he shot out to fight the more than one thousand peak Dao Seeking puppets, intending to use the ancient python’s final attack to kill the true Immortal.

Such a decision was audacious, and required incredible self-confidence.

As for the old man with the age-changing transformation ability, his eyes flickered as he chose the same tactic.

There were, however, quite a few cultivators who chose to use the ancient beast's powerful attack first, rumbling out and slaughtering the thousand peak Dao Seeking puppets. After the puppets had been completely wiped out, the cultivators would step forward themselves to fight against the five false immortals.

There were multiple cultivators who made each of the various choices. Shortly, the echoing sound of booms and the glow of magical abilities rocked Heaven and Earth within each of the various worlds.

However, the actual scenes playing out within these worlds was hidden to the observers out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea; the only thing they could see was the list of names and the numbers representing the kill count next to each name, which were quickly soaring.

As for the high-level Patriarchs from the Three Great Daoist Societies, Four Great Clans, Five Great Holy Lands, and the Three Churches and Six Sects, they were all sitting cross-legged in an enormous palace in the starry sky, staring at an enormous ancient mirror.

The mirror was split into three sections, within which could be seen clear images of everything that was happening on the three Ancient Roads.

"That masked young man chose the hardest path, but from that, you can see that his heart is as resolute as a boulder. He definitely has potential."

"That cultivator with the age-transformations is most likely an apprentice of Patriarch Mirage. He might also be a rogue cultivator, but in any case, it's quite rare to see cultivators of the Dao Seeking stage who practice time transformation magic."

"There are many potential stars in this trial by fire...."

"From the three choices given them, we can learn about their personalities. Although, it doesn't matter which choice they make, as long as they pass this stage, they can be considered Chosen!"

The old Patriarchs discussed the matter calmly, occasionally glancing at the Ancient Roads of the Nascent Soul and Spirit Severing to identify people they deemed worthy of notice.

Meng Hao, naturally, also received some attention. And yet, on the outside, there were currently no numbers displayed next to the name Fang Mu.

Meanwhile, the Patriarchs were continuing to discuss the matter....

“Hmm. That young cultivator with the mosquitos is the first one to make an unexpected move.”

“There’s also that kid in the yellow robe. He didn’t make any of the obvious choices either!”

All eyes in the palace were fixed on one of the scenes playing out on the mirror’s surface. The young man with the mosquitos waved his hands, causing his mosquitos to fly toward the python, whereupon they stabbed their mouthparts into it and began to absorb its blood.

Another image depicted a young man who had performed unremarkably in the first stage. His body suddenly went blurry, and he fused down into the python. He quickly took control of it and set it to fighting, hoping to use it to kill both the puppets and the false Immortals.

Not too much time passed before other cultivators also began to use various unorthodox methods that did not conform with the three obvious choices. None of the members of the crowd in the palace seemed to find this unexpected, and in fact, had apparently predicted that such a thing would happen.

“This is excellent. There are far more people doing the unexpected than in the last trial by fire.”

“From ancient times until now, there are always competitors in the Ancient Road’s trial by fire who make breathtaking achievements in their later days. This group of cultivators is not bad at all!”

“How come that Fang Mu hasn’t done anything yet?”

Amidst their chatting and laughing, some people had been paying attention to Meng Hao all along. Instantly, all eyes turned to the image portraying Meng Hao. He stood atop the head of the python, seemingly in a daze as the more than one thousand puppets bore down on him. They were now only about three hundred meters away.

"That Fang Mu most likely doesn't have any plan at all. It's not uncommon for cultivators to struggle when it comes to making decisions."

"That's too bad. I'd hoped to see if he could perform exceptionally well in the second stage too."

"For someone to take first place in two stages in a row isn't unheard of, but isn't very common either. Unfortunately, I'm afraid he's not the type that can do it."

As the puppets whistled toward him, Meng Hao's eyes glittered, and his lips turned up slightly into a cold smile.

"The three choices seem different, but in fact, they are the same. Perhaps by using some unexpected tactics, it would be possible to introduce some degree of variation in the results. However, even if you were able to wipe all of these things out, that would be overlooking something even more important!"

"And that is... that planet!" His eyes shone with a strange light as he looked at the planet.

"In truth, this python has another function other than its one attack... and that is the power of flight!"

"Before I proceed, though, I need to test out whether or not this body is real!" Eyes glittering, he suddenly reached his right hand out and then slapped it down hard onto his chest.

A boom rang out, his body trembled, and his eyes began to glow with a brilliant light. He'd felt like something was off as soon as he'd entered this place. Although everything seemed real, after experiencing the illusory world of the ancient Demon Immortal Sect, he had a much deeper understanding of such things.

In all the other worlds, everyone was already in the midst of furious fighting.

In Meng Hao's world, the puppets were closing in. Meng Hao suddenly sat down cross-legged and then stretched his hands out to rest on the ancient python's head.

The python's eyes turned bright red, and it let out a roar. Then its body burst into flames as it used the last scraps of its life force to shoot forward at blinding speed.

The puppets scattered as the python swept through them. Even the five false immortals were incapable of blocking it. It moved with shocking speed as it carried Meng Hao directly toward the planet.

As soon as it reached the planet itself, the python collapsed into bits of ash that vanished. At the same time, the aura of a true Immortal exploded out from within the planet. A figure flew out, wreathed in golden light, moving with astonishing speed toward Meng Hao, who had just stepped foot onto the planet itself.

Its energy soared, and it looked like a windstorm as it bore down on Meng Hao.

However, even as it neared, a vicious expression appeared on Meng Hao's face, and he unleashed the Star Plucking Magic. A huge hand appeared that grabbed onto the golden figure, after which, Meng Hao closed his eyes. With ruthless decisiveness, he caused his cultivation base...

To detonate!

The power of the self-detonation was channeled directly into the golden figure through the Star Plucking hand. It didn't matter how incredibly powerful this figure was; its body was filled with roaring and, because its aura was chaotic to begin with, the power of the self-detonation compelled its inner aura to become even more turbulent, such that the figure was also forced...

To self-detonate!

A massive boom rattled out as both Meng Hao and the figure self-detonated together. The entire planet was then thrown into instability, causing it to shatter into countless pieces. A massive destructive power was unleashed as the fragments then transformed into a black hole which began to suck everything in!

The puppets and false Immortals had no time to fight back; they were instantly swallowed up by the black hole.

In the palace in the starry sky, the members of the crowd looked on in stupefaction.

# Chapter 847: Talent. Cultivation. Age.

Crowds in locations all over the Ninth Mountain and Sea were watching the events on the vortex screens. However, regardless of location, the eyes of every spectator suddenly went wide with disbelief.

On the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking, Fang Mu's name had previously had no number next to it. In the blink of an eye, there was suddenly a number: 1,006!

The number appeared so quickly, so suddenly, that people didn't even have a chance to register it mentally before both the number, and Fang Mu's name, disappeared.

The light that covered the altar upon which Meng Hao stood slowly faded away, to reveal Meng Hao, sitting there cross-legged.

He was the first person...

To pass the stage!!

"That's... that's impossible!!"

"What just happened? I remember that just now, Fang Mu didn't have any numbers next to his name at all. That means he hadn't even killed a single enemy. Then I blinked my eyes, and he passed the stage?"

"A bunch of numbers appeared just now, and then they vanished, and Fang Mu passed the stage. Is it possible... is it possible that he used only one move to kill all of the enemies?!?!"

"Heavens! He got first place in the second stage too! Hardly any time has passed, not even a hundred breaths!!"

"He got first place in the first stage, and now first place in the second stage!!" Everyone out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea was completely shocked. Cries of astonishment rang out in all of the locations where people were watching, and the buzz of conversation immediately rose up.

In the vast Eastern Lands, Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li were gaping at the scene. Even they weren't too sure exactly what Meng Hao had done.

Pill Demon and Chu Yuyan were also looking on with wide eyes, staring dumbly at Meng Hao on the screen.

The crowds out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were in an uproar.

“That Fang Mu, he’s definitely the star of this whole trial by fire!”

“How powerful is he exactly? He actually... he actually killed all of the enemies with one move!”

“I want to see how exactly he did it. It must have been breathtaking!!”

Meanwhile, not too far away from Planet East Victory, an enormous turtle floated in the starry sky, carrying an entire continent on its back. He was staring in shock at the three vortex screens down below on East Victory.

“Dammit. It must be him! Even if he transformed into dust, the Patriarch would still recognize that little bastard!!

“But... what exactly did he do? He got first place in the blink of an eye!” This gargantuan turtle was of course none other than Patriarch Reliance.

At the same time, in another location in the starry sky, a figure could be seen sitting cross-legged on an asteroid, hair disheveled as he looked up at three vortex screens. His expression was taciturn, but a brilliant light glittered in his eyes.

“How could I have imagined that I wouldn’t die.... Meng Hao, Planet South Heaven was only the first half of my life. I have to thank you for helping me understand so much. In the remaining years, I will definitely find a way to pay you back.”

Even as everyone in the Ninth Mountain and Sea was shaken, back in the palace among the stars, silence reigned. The Patriarchs of the various sects and clans, even the representatives from the Three Great Daoist Societies, were all watching with wide eyes and slack jaws.

After a long moment, one of the old men chuckled wryly and said, “That’s cheating!!”

These people were the only ones who could clearly see what had actually

happened.

"The fact that he came up with a way to seize victory like that might be considered cheating, but it's amazing nonetheless!"

"He didn't hesitate to kill himself along with the enemy! Fervor like that is what clinched the victory!"

"Compared to this Fang Mu, all the others couldn't even be considered to be using unorthodox tactics. His methods are truly astonishing. To self-detonate with such decisiveness, and furthermore, to control it so ingeniously... we can be certain that Fang Mu was the first person to realize that the second stage was an illusory world!"

"Even still, he should be disqualified! Fraudulent methods like that are a complete disgrace!"

"Oh please, you want him disqualified so you can secretly go recruit him! That's not cheating. The other competitors just didn't think of that idea, or perhaps couldn't pull it off. That's just weakness on their part. This Fang Mu has definitely cleared this stage!"

As the discussions continued in the palace, one of the three Elders from the Three Great Daoist Societies who sat at the head of the group suddenly opened his eyes, filling the palace with endless light.

"Fang Mu. Stage cleared!" He spoke only four words, but they echoed out from the palace into the starry sky, and then, by means of a special technique, echoed throughout the Ancient Road, and then out into the rest of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Suddenly, a ranking list appeared in the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking, and in first place was the name Fang Mu. Every spot beneath it was blank.

The Ninth Mountain and Sea was abuzz, and many of the Patriarchs seated in the palace pulled out jade slips to transmit information to their sects, ordering them to attempt to recruit Fang Mu.

It was at this point that Meng Hao opened his eyes. At first, they seemed blank, but then quickly grew bright. His expression was calm as he sat there cross-legged and unmoving.

The second stage was a complete illusion, and the so-called risk to the lives of the competitors was false. However, because of the brutality of the first stage, the other competitors subconsciously assumed that the second stage would be exactly the same.

By now, roughly half of the prescribed time period had passed. Shockingly, a blue-robed young woman from the group who had proceeded 3,000 paces suddenly became visible from within the light that surrounded her. Her eyes brimmed with confidence as she looked over at the ranking list, and then suddenly went wide with shock.

“He was actually faster than me!” she thought. “I possess the Dao of souls, allowing me to take control of the puppets. And yet Fang Mu possesses some more powerful divine ability? Just what is it?!”

More people began to clear the second stage after the young woman. It didn’t take long for enough time to pass for an incense stick to burn. Roughly a third of the competitors didn’t manage to clear the stage. As for those who did, they used a variety of methods to succeed. When it came to the true Immortal, most of them chose to use the python to destroy it in a single blow.

No one used the same method as Meng Hao.

As people emerged from clearing the stage, they looked over at the ranking list, and were shocked.

“Fang Mu took first place in the first stage, and now he took first place in the second stage too!”

“Dammit!!” The masked young man was one of the last to emerge from the second stage. Behind his mask, his face was extremely unsightly. His previously high aspirations had been dealt a heavy blow. As for the old man with the age-transformation powers, he also looked ashen-faced, and was frowning.

Most of the cultivators who distinguished themselves in the first stage did not fare very well in the second stage.

Meanwhile, on the Ancient Roads of the Nascent Soul and Spirit

Severing, the second stage had likewise concluded. Fatty, Chen Fan and Wang Youcai had all succeeded. Chen Fan put on the most astonishing performance, and although he didn't take first place, he was in the top 100, which was quite an accomplishment!

As for Fatty and Wang Youcai, they ended up in the top 1,000.

Li Shiqi ranked toward the bottom, and had barely been able to pass.

It was only the second stage, but the previously large number of competitors had already been whittled down by roughly half.

Of course, Meng Hao's performance caused a huge stir in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, and the name Fang Mu was now planted thoroughly in everyone's minds. Many people were now looking forward to the third stage, to see if he could take first place yet again!

On the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking, Ling Yunzi of the Ninth Sea God World stood there in illusory form, looking out at the crowds. This time, his gaze lingered on Meng Hao for a bit longer than it had last time.

Without another word, he then waved his hand, causing everyone to disappear. When they reappeared, they were further along down the Ancient Road. They still stood on altars, although everyone's positions were now changed. Some who were in the lead, were now sent further back, whereas some who had been far in the back, had now caught up.

Only Meng Hao was alone, far up ahead of everyone on his own altar. Behind him were all the other Dao Seeking cultivators, staring at his back, faces filled with the desire to do battle.

"The previous two stages tested your battle prowess," Ling Yunzi said coolly. "You will now pass through the third, fourth, and fifth stages simultaneously. They will test your latent talent, the depth of your cultivation base, and also... your true age!"

"The higher your latent talent, the deeper your cultivation base, and the younger you are, the more outstanding your results will be!"

"This is a composite test. Even if you did not perform well in the first two stages, if you do well in this third stage, you can still rise above the

other competitors.” With that, he waved his hand, causing everything to flash with bright colors, and a wind to pick up. Suddenly, three enormous stone steles rose up out of the altars in front of each competitor.

Each stone stele was inscribed with a single large character.

Talent! Cultivation! Age!

“Place your hand onto the stone stele, and allow its power to enter into you. Let the testing begin!”

The majority of the cultivators on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking stepped forward and placed their hands onto the ‘talent’ stone steles. In the blink of an eye, columns of light began to rise up from the stone steles, each one reaching a different height. Most reached a height of approximately 30 meters. However, there was one that suddenly shot up to 60 meters, drawing quite a bit of attention.

To any sect, the latent talent a cultivator possessed was actually more important than battle prowess.

Next, a 90-meter column of light appeared, then a 150-meter column, a 180-meter column, and even a 300-meter column!

That one belonged to the young woman who had emerged from the second stage right after Meng Hao. She looked at the column of light, her expression as calm as it usually was.

Behind her, more 300-meter columns appeared. Among the other cultivators who possessed 300-meter columns were the masked young man and the cultivator with the mosquitos. Those two, along with the young woman, were known to the audience by now. The others whose columns reached 300 meters were all people who hadn’t attracted much attention in the previous two stages, but were now making a spectacular showing.

“A 300-meter column of light shows an incredible level of latent talent. I never imagined that there would be seven people with such latent talent in the Dao Seeking division of the trial by fire!”

“There are nine in the Spirit Severing division!”

"There are even more in the Nascent Soul division! A total of seventeen 300-meter columns!"

"I wonder how Fang Mu will perform...." While the crowds outside discussed the proceedings, the Patriarchs in the palace who represented the various sects and clans were looking on with glittering eyes. They eyed the various cultivators with exceptional latent talent, and of course, were looking at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao hesitated for a moment. He had never really paid much attention to his latent talent, but he lifted his hand up and then placed it onto the stone stele.

As soon as he touched it, a gentle power spread out into his body from the stone stele. It quickly flowed into his qi and blood passageways, eventually swirling out through his whole body. However, it was at this point that the illusory Immortal meridian created by the bronze lamp suddenly quivered. Then, it began to emit a gravitational force that... instantly sucked up the gentle power from the stone stele.

Meng Hao's eyes went wide.

# Chapter 848: Senior, Bring Another!

On the Ancient Road of the Nascent Soul, glittering light rose up. Fatty stared blankly at the stone stele in front of him; the beam of light that rose up was only 90 meters tall, although there were still quite a few others that weren't as tall as his.

"Fudge!" he thought, his eyes blazing with fury. "Why the hell isn't my latent talent the best? That doesn't make sense! All those years ago the Golden Frost Sect told me that my latent talent was unequalled in the whole world!" He was especially depressed when he looked over and saw that Wang Youcai's column of light was 150 meters tall.

Then he looked over at Chen Fan, and Fatty's eyes went wide with disbelief. Chen Fan's beam of light... was actually among the 300-meter columns!

Li Shiqi's wasn't quite 300 meters tall, but was still tall enough at 250 meters.

On the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking, as the competitors placed their hands on the stone steles, radiant light shot up, filling the area with scintillating brightness. Only Meng Hao's stone stele was completely without any light whatsoever. He smiled wryly.

It was impossible for the stone stele to emit any light whatsoever, because the gentle power that was the source of the light never returned from Meng Hao's body into the stele. Instead, it had been swallowed up by the ethereal Immortal meridian inside of him.

Right now, the audiences in the outside world were all abuzz. Much importance was attached to the latent talent stage of the event. After all, latent talent was an important foundation for cultivators, and all sects paid close attention to it. As for the cultivators who displayed unusual amounts of latent talent, they were immediately taken note of.

There were quite a few people who looked over at Meng Hao. He had taken first place in the previous two stages, which put him directly in the limelight. Many people were waiting in anticipation to see if he would

take first place in the third stage as well. Of course, there were also others who looked on with cold smiles, just waiting to ridicule him.

By now, all of the stone steles were lit up, be they on the Ancient Roads of the Nascent Soul or Spirit Severing, or the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking. Now, all attention was focused on Meng Hao....

This was especially the case because, after taking first in the first two stages, he was now ahead of everyone on the Ancient Road. There weren't even any other cultivators around him, which made his position even more conspicuous.

"What is Fang Mu up to?"

"Eee? There's no light coming from the stone stele at all! What's wrong? He can't possibly be completely devoid of latent talent. Even if it's poor, there would still be some light, right?"

"Maybe he didn't actually start the analysis yet. But hold on, his hand is clearly resting on the stele!"

Soon, everyone on the outside was looking over at the image of Meng Hao on the vortex screens, and were astonished.

The powerful experts from the various sects were also watching, as was everyone in the palace up the starry sky. Everyone from the Three Churches and Six Sects, the Five Great Holy Lands, the Four Great Clans, and even the Three Great Daoist Societies, was now looking at Meng Hao and his lightless stone stele.

"What crafty scheme is that little bastard pulling off?" thought Patriarch Reliance, his face twisted with fury. Although he had a complex relationship with Meng Hao, Meng Hao was the sole Inner Sect disciple from the Reliance sect. Therefore, the scene that was playing out right now left Patriarch Reliance feeling quite disgraced.

Back in the vast Eastern Lands, Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li were also staring in shock. They knew exactly what kind of latent talent Meng Hao had. Although he'd experienced the Seventh Year Tribulation, he was also the first person in the entire Fang Clan in years to actually experience a

second and even a third lifetime.

Because of that, they knew that his bloodline ran especially strong. A cultivator's bloodline was one of the aspects of their latent talent, so they couldn't understand why the stone stele in front of Meng Hao did not shine with light.

Meng Hao cleared his throat and looked around at all the other people and their columns of light. Feeling all the eyes boring down into his back, he slowly lifted his hand up and then pressed it down again onto the stone stele.

The gentle power appeared once again, but just like the last time, the Immortal meridian swallowed it up. It was at this point that Meng Hao noticed that after absorbing the power, the Immortal meridian was a bit different.

He casually lifted his hand up again and then pushed it down, causing more of the gentle energy to spread out inside him. The spectators looked on in shock as Meng Hao continuously attempted to activate the light.

After trying seven or eight times, he realized that the Immortal meridian had absorbed too much of the gentle power, and now there wasn't any emanating out from the stone stele at all. However, the Immortal meridian inside of him had changed from its previous illusory state. About ten percent of it had solidified.

This development caused Meng Hao's heart to pound with wild joy and excitement. He knew that the moment the Immortal Meridian was complete, he would step into true Immortality.

Suppressing his excitement, he plastered an expression of surprise onto his face and then pushed his hand down onto the stele a few more times experimentally. He glanced around, then looked up, apparently frustrated, and called out into the void: "Senior Ling Yunzi, are you there!? This stone stele is broken! Can I have another?

"Actually, sir, it would be best to bring out several, just in case there are any other broken ones. That will save you some frustration in the long run." He gazed up into the starry sky, an expression of eager anticipation

on his face.

Everything was silent. The other cultivators on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking all looked on silently.

In the starry sky palace, the Patriarchs from the various sects were all frowning. However, they knew that the Ruins of Immortality were veiled in mystery. Even though the Three Great Daoist Societies held control of the three Ancient Roads, there were many things about them that they didn't understand.

After a long moment, the Patriarch of the Ninth Sea God World said, "Fellow Daoist Ling Yunzi, give him another."

The voice echoed out into the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking, and Ling Yunzi materialized out of the void. He looked down indifferently at Meng Hao, then waved his sleeve, causing the stone stele in front of him to vanish as if had been teleported away. Moments later, it was replaced by another stone stele.

Meng Hao's eyes gleamed as he quickly reached his hand out and pushed it down onto the stone stele.

"SHINE!" he bellowed. The gentle power once again entered his body and began to flow about. At the same time, an imperceptible flicker appeared in Meng Hao's eyes as he used both the meat jelly and the black feather to conceal anything that was happening inside of him.

The Immortal meridian quickly sucked in every last bit of the power, although it didn't seem to have a very drastic effect on the meridian itself. Meng Hao blinked. Then, as Ling Yunzi looked on wide-eyed, he dramatically inspected the stone stele and tried to place his hand onto it several times. Soon, all the power from the stele was sucked away by the Immortal Meridian.

Ling Yunzi wasn't the only person who was paying close attention to what was happening. The people in the starry sky palace were also observing closely, and their frowns deepened.

"There's something wrong!"

“The stone stele isn’t defective. Even though everything seems normal, there’s actually something strange going on inside of his body.”

“He must cultivate some unique Daoist magic....”

As the discussions buzzed in the palace, an old man wearing a long crimson gown suddenly rose to his feet.

“There’s no need for any testing,” he said. “Ladies and Gentleman, Mount Sun would be happy to dispel any doubts for you. I will recruit him to join Mount Sun, and then all disputes will be resolved.” Laughing heartily, he began to walk forward, but then his path was suddenly obstructed.

“There’s no need for the Holy Land of Mount Sun to go to that trouble! The Burning Incense Stick Society is more than willing to take the risk of recruiting him.”

In the blink of an eye, the atmosphere in the palace was completely astir. As they verbally sparred over the matter, Meng Hao stood on his altar on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking. Sighing, he looked up at the grim-faced Ling Yunzi.

“Senior, this... this one’s broken too! Why don’t you give me a few more...?”

Ling Yunzi stared at him silently for a moment, then waved his hand. Rumbling echoed out as four stone steles with the character ‘talent’ inscribed on them suddenly appeared.

Meng Hao’s heart thumped, and he coughed lightly again and began the assessment.

“Hm, this one’s broken.

“Eee? This one’s broken too! Dammit!

“Heavens! Who would have thought that this one would also be broken!

“I... I can’t believe it! This one’s broken too!” Meng Hao looked up with a sheepish, pained expression, as if the Heavens were playing a cruel joke on him. Ling Yunzi looked back with an extremely unsightly expression.

Of course, inwardly, Meng Hao was extremely excited. Although the five stone steles from just now had not been incredibly effective, they had pushed his Immortal meridian from being ten percent solid to twenty percent.

Of course, all of the crowds looking on in the Ninth Mountain and Sea weren't sure whether to laugh or cry. Although Meng Hao was no longer in first place, he was actually even more a center of attention than before, when he had placed first.

"Senior, why don't you give me another ten," Meng Hao said expectantly.

Ling Yunzi's eyelids twitched. With a cold harrumph, he waved his hand, then apathetically announced the first place winner of the third stage.

After that he said, "The next stage assesses cultivation base! Let the assessment begin!"

As his words rang out, the 'talent' stone steles vanished.

The first place winner of the third stage glared at Meng Hao in frustration, but could do nothing except wallow in anger.

"Senior!" Meng Hao cried out in distress. "Hey, senior! I'm not done with the assessment! This isn't fair!"

Ling Yunzi completely ignored Meng Hao, and in fact, vanished into thin air.

Nobody paid any attention to Meng Hao's complaints whatsoever. At the same time, everyone else on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking stepped forward toward the 'cultivation' stone steles. The Patriarchs in the starry sky palace up above looked on with glittering eyes. Although they had been bickering moments ago, it was all in accord with the various plans they had.

As for the crowds in the Ninth Sea, they had originally had high expectations for the third stage, but after what had happened with Fang Mu, the mood... was completely different.

"This is so unfair!" grumbled Meng Hao. He walked forward to the

‘cultivation’ stone stele, reached out his right hand, and was delighted to find that the gentle power, although somewhat different than the power from before, was actually slightly more powerful. As soon as it entered his body and began to circulate around, the Immortal meridian trembled and then thirstily spread out to absorb all of it.

“Dammit! How could this one be broken too?” exclaimed Meng Hao, seemingly furious. As all of the other stone steles around him shone with bright light, Meng Hao continued to attempt to get his to work, looking as though he refused to believe it wouldn’t. After the seventh or eighth attempt, he had absorbed enough power from the stone stele to solidify his Immortal meridian to thirty percent.

His cultivation base, with its eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal, actually experienced some advancement.

Licking his lips, Meng Hao once again called out loudly. “This really isn’t fair! Senior Ling Yunzi, please, let me switch steles!”

Ling Yunzi materialized and, his expression dark, looked at Meng Hao and waved his arm. The ‘cultivation’ stone steles vanished, and then Ling Yunzi’s annoyed voice echoed out.

“Pipe down! Any more chatter from you and you’ll be disqualified! Next stage, the age assessment!”

Meng Hao blinked. Feeling slightly guilty, he proceeded toward the ‘age’ stone stele and pushed his hand down onto it.

# Chapter 849: Creativity

On the Ancient Road of the Nascent Soul, everything was normal. The cultivators on the Ancient Road of Spirit Severing had made incredible progress. These three stages of talent, cultivation, and age assessments tested one's foundation, and as such, were of great importance to the various sects and clans. There were already quite a few people from both the Ancient Road of the Nascent Soul and Spirit Severing whose names had been recorded by the sects. As long as they continued to perform well in the following stages, their future good fortune was essentially guaranteed.

Chen Fan was just such a person!

Unfortunately, Fatty and the others had not yet made it onto any of the lists.

In contrast, the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking was in complete chaos. It wasn't that the proceedings themselves were chaotic, but rather, there was a feeling of unpredictability because nobody was paying attention to who would take first place in the assessments of talent, cultivation and age.

All sorts of conversations were playing out throughout the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

"Just what kind of latent talent does Fang Mu have? And what cultivation base? How old is he?!"

"I can't believe the stone steles didn't work! They even changed steles several times. There's obviously something special about Fang Mu!"

"Oh right, who took first in the talent and cultivation assessments?"

"I wasn't really paying attention. I'm just wondering whether the age-assessing stone stele will be effective on Fang Mu!"

Back on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking, Meng Hao was like an unwelcome guest whose style and actions took the wind out of everyone's sails. He was now, once again, the focus of all attention.

Although he wasn't in first place... the current first place competitor was

being completely ignored.

More and more sects were becoming interested in Meng Hao, and in fact, his name had already been recorded by all of the Three Churches and Six Sects. Furthermore, it was in first place on all of those lists!

Meng Hao bashfully placed his hand on the ‘age’ stone stele, sucked in the energy, solidifying his Immortal meridian to forty percent.

He felt that it was quite a pity that Ling Yunzi was so stingy. Sighing wistfully to himself, he thought of yelling out another complaint about how unfair it all was, but managed to keep his mouth shut. He said nothing, but rather, stood there gauging the other competitors’ columns of light. No matter how high any of those columns were, everyone’s faces were extremely unsightly.

“The age-assessing stage is concluded!” announced Ling Yunzi with the flick of a sleeve. Everyone except for Meng Hao vanished and reappeared on altars further off in the distance.

Meng Hao had now gone from first place to dead last.

This development caused everyone who was competing in the trial by fire on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking to be very agitated. Virtually, all of them turned to glare back at Meng Hao, inwardly musing about how benevolent Ling Yunzi was. In their minds, someone like Meng Hao should obviously have been disqualified immediately.

“He obviously just doesn’t have enough latent talent, so he used some insidious technique to disable the stone steles. How shameless!”

“There must be something weird about his cultivation base that he doesn’t want anyone to know about. To use such methods to skirt the issue is really detestable. You know, he should be disqualified! Merely getting sent to last place is really showing him mercy!”

“Punish him to sate our anger!”

Everyone on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking was furious at Meng Hao, especially those who hadn’t made a name for themselves in the previous two stages. Those who had excelled in the assessments of talent,

cultivation, and age were especially angry.

“This isn’t fair!” yelled Meng Hao.

“Not fair?” replied Ling Yunzi, glaring back at him. “You didn’t earn any marks in the last three stages, you wasted several stone steles, and even depleted some of the valuable resources of the Ruins of Immortality! You’re lucky to not be disqualified! I dare you to keep yapping!”

Anyone else who was in Meng Hao’s position that received such words and such a gaze from Ling Yunzi would instantly be filled with awe, fear, and concern over the consequences of their words. However, as far as Meng Hao was concerned, he hadn’t come here to join any sect.

“Oh great and powerful senior,” he said, “I know that I was in the wrong. Listen, how about this. Just give me three more stone steles to try out. If they don’t work, then junior will resign himself to his fate.”

Ling Yunzi gaped at Meng Hao, so angry that he almost felt like laughing. Were it not for Meng Hao’s previous performance having attracted the attention of all the spectators outside, he would definitely disqualify him immediately. Meng Hao was turning into a real headache. In the end, Ling Yunzi just pretended he didn’t hear him.

“The sixth, seventh, and eighth stages will assess your divine sense, willpower, and intuition!”

In response to Ling Yunzi’s words, Meng Hao blinked. Inwardly, he vowed that the next time he saw Fan Dong’er, he would definitely show her who was boss, and vent his anger toward Ling Yunzi on her.

“You will pass through these three stages simultaneously. Each of you will find yourself in your own world, filled with unique and strange phenomena, which you will use to create your own divine ability!

“Depending on the results of your creation, you will be presented with a certain number of....” At this point, Ling Yunzi faltered for a moment before speaking the final two words.

“... stone steles!”

When Meng Hao heard the words ‘stone steles,’ his heart began to thump, and his eyes shone brightly.

Ling Yunzi waved his hand, causing all of the altars began to tremble; massive amounts of fog began to accumulate, covering over everyone present. Then, the power of teleportation spread out, and everyone disappeared.

Outside in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, everyone settled their qi and calmed their minds, then focused on the scenes playing out on the vortex screens. It could be said that the first two stages tested fighting, and the third through fifth stages tested the foundation. In that case, the sixth, seventh and eighth stages tested creativity!

For cultivators, creativity required divine sense, willpower, and of course intuition.

Every time the Three Great Daoist Societies held a recruitment event, shocking and peerless individuals would create divine abilities in these three stages that would become incredibly famous.

Everyone was watching with keen anticipation.

In the starry sky palace, the Patriarchs were no longer squabbling, but instead, were watching with rapt attention. The Five Holy Lands, the Three Great Daoist Societies, all of them were closely examining the screens, and the cultivators on the Ancient Roads of the Nascent Soul, Spirit Severing and Dao Seeking.

The people who had ended up on the name lists of the various sects were the subject of special scrutiny. As long as they maintained good positions during these three stages, then there was no question about whether or not they would eventually be recruited.

As for the rest of the people who hadn’t made it onto the name lists, if they performed spectacularly in these three stages, they would surely be noticed and their names would be added to the lists.

Up in the palace among the stars, everyone was sighing emotionally.

“Creating a divine ability is not a simple thing! It’s very difficult.... I can’t

wait to see what stunning divine abilities we will see!"

"In any other place, it would probably be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to find someone in this group who could create a divine ability. However, the Ruins of Immortality are a special place, with a unique power. There are astonishing things here that would normally be very rare, or even nonexistent in the outside world, things that can inspire the competitors, and influence them inwardly."

"That's right, on the Ancient Roads, it will be much easier for them to create divine abilities. If they can't make one here, it shows that their future path will not stretch very far."

"Divine abilities must be created, a process that stems from the intuition of the creator. Willpower could be considered part of intuition, whereas divine will acts as a Dao Protector. In the final analysis, the same objects and the same source of inspiration will be viewed differently by different people, and can lead to different forms of enlightenment."

"From ancient times until now, the Daoist Societies have held this trial by fire on several occasions. The most powerful person to ever participate was Sir Fan from the Ninth Sea God World. When he created his divine ability that year, he caused nineteen stone steles to appear, which is a record that stands to this day!"

"He created The Mortal Sea Becomes Immortal, which was eventually developed into a Daoist magic, one of the most powerful ever!" 1

Meanwhile, as the people in the starry sky palace were sighing in emotional reminiscence, all of the people being teleported opened their eyes as the scenery around them became clear.

A tremor ran through Meng Hao as he looked around at completely unfamiliar lands. Everything around him was a mass of black soil that stretched out as far as the eye could see.

It was blazingly hot, and nine suns could be seen high up in the sky, almost like nine mighty Immortals looking out across the lands.

This place was a wasteland!

Scattered structures were visible off in the distance, half sunken into the soil; those that remained above the surface were in a state of collapse. However, carvings of auspicious beasts could be seen on their surfaces, harkening back to their former glory.

A moaning wind blew through the land, brushing against the black soil, causing what sounded like a sad melody to spring up. It filled one with the desire to go searching for whoever might have listened to such a song in the past, but as it floated across the land, it seemed to be drifting through countless ages of time, and ancient memories.

Meng Hao stood there, completely alone in this vast stretch of land.

The only thing to accompany him was the murmuring wind, the black soil that stretched out in all directions, and the ruins that could be seen off in the distance.

Being in such a location caused Meng Hao's mood to sink, and his eyes flickered with a strange light.

"So, this place can influence the emotions," he thought, sending his divine sense spreading out. It swept the area, and in addition to everything he had already seen, he could now sense a faint pressure weighing down on him.

If he hadn't sent his divine sense out, he would have never detected it.... Furthermore, he was only aware of it within the range of his divine sense.

Meng Hao's expression slowly changed as he carefully examined his surroundings using divine sense. Now he could sense that there were actually different ranges of pressures, some strong, some weak, coming from all the various ruins lying about!

It was at this point that Ling Yunzi's voice echoed out to everyone on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking. It almost sounded like it was coming from a different world that overlapped with this one.

"Sixth stage, divine sense.

"Seventh stage, willpower.

“Eighth stage, intuition.

“The world you are in contains 99 ruins, as well as a virtually intact Immortal pavilion. The pressure is different in each area, and you will find different forms of enlightenment in each location. The more powerful your divine sense is, the more Immortal ruins you will be able to sense, and the greater your enlightenment will be.

“After you find each Immortal ruin, your willpower will determine whether or not you can stand up to the pressure there.

“Your intuition will decide your final type of enlightenment, and how it becomes a divine ability!” Ling Yunzi’s archaic voice echoed about in the wasteland; it almost sounded like he was a figure from ancient times, that his voice was being affected by the agedness of the ruins and then transmitted through time into the ears of the competitors.

The wind whimpered, and the land looked as ancient as ever. Meng Hao’s eyes glittered as he sent his divine sense out and found that it was impossible to cover the entire world. He could only see seven sets of ruins.

The nearest was about three thousand meters away, and it appeared to be a dried up well, surrounded by a broken-down wall.

Meng Hao strolled over, and when he was about three hundred meters away from the well, he could sense pressure pushing down on him. It was powerful, like a windstorm.

The windstorm bore down on him, accompanied by a voice that, when compared to Ling Yunzi, truly did seem to come from ancient times.

“Whenever I see it, I think of you....

“To anyone who hears my voice in the future: Have you felt the same way as I do? Do you also have an object that makes you think of someone?”

\*

1. Sir Fan’s surname in Chinese is 凡 fán, a surname shared by Fan

Dong'er, which means “ordinary” or “mortal.” In the divine ability he created, the word “mortal” is the same character, a play on words.

# Chapter 850: Can the Leopard Change its Spots?

Meng Hao stopped in place and stared blankly at a vague illusion that suddenly appeared in front of him. He saw a middle-aged man wearing a long white robe, sitting cross-legged in front of the well.

The wall surrounding the well was suddenly intact, and a simple hut could be seen attached to it, the sides of which were covered in bottle-gourd vines.

The middle-aged man seemed to be gazing eternally at the well, as if he were locked in a single moment for all eternity.

It was a simple vision, almost ordinary, but Meng Hao felt himself trembling. The voice in his ear penetrated into his mind and echoed through his soul.

He thought of many things, many people, many objects.

He wasn't sure when, but at some point, he had walked up, sat cross-legged in front of the well and started staring at it. His mind filled with perplexity and struggle, as if the ancient voice from just now was allowing the dilapidated Ancient ruin here to interfere with his willpower and make him lose himself.

Inside, he was fighting against the pressure, and based on the intensity of his willpower, he was able to maintain a scrap of consciousness that prevented him from losing himself.

After two hours passed, the perplexity in Meng Hao's eyes slowly faded away, and was replaced with a bright light.

"What an incredible Dao Projection!" thought Meng Hao. Sweat pouring down his forehead, he took a deep breath and thought back to the daze he had just been in, and it frightened him. If there were any deadly forces in this area instead of just good fortune and chances for enlightenment, then Meng Hao would have been in great danger just now.

“Divine sense will allow me to find more of these Immortal ruins, and my willpower will enable me to fight back against the pressure. As for intuition, that is what I need to gain enlightenment. That... is what leads to creativity.”

After a moment of silence, Meng Hao continued to sit there cross-legged, recalling everything he had just seen.

“There must be an object which, when I see it, will make me think of someone,” he murmured. He opened his bag of holding and swept it with his divine sense. Suddenly, he paused, and his eyes flickered awkwardly.

“Uh....” He hesitated for a moment, then pulled out a stack of paper from his bag of holding.

“Every time I look at this particular promissory note, I think of the resplendent Taiyang Zi....

“And this paper makes me think of Ji Xiaoxiao.

“This one makes me think of Song Luodan.

“And this one... Li Ling’er. This one is Sun Hai. It’s too bad I don’t have a promissory note from Fan Dong’er. Ji Yin didn’t write one either.” After looking over the promissory notes, he smiled wryly and realized that the enlightenment he had experienced didn’t seem to be the same as that of the middle-aged man in front of the well.

The man obviously missed an old friend or acquaintance, or perhaps a significant other. Meng Hao’s experience was quite different than that.

Sighing, Meng Hao put the promissory notes back in his bag of holding and rose to his feet. After looking at the ruins one last time, he flickered off into the distance.

“I don’t think the enlightenment of that place suits me,” he thought, shaking his head. “If it did, how come I would think of promissory notes in a place that was clearly designed to make one think of old friends?” He turned into a beam of light that shot off into the distance.

Of course, his divine sense was backed by eighty percent of the power of

a true Immortal, so when he sent it out to search for another ruin, he quickly found one, and then flew in that direction.

What he found was a dried-up old river.

The only thing left behind was an empty riverbed, and pressure once again radiated out as Meng Hao neared. This time, there was no voice, only pressure, and this pressure was stronger than that which he had experienced at the well.

He sat down cross-legged in the riverbed and wrestled against the pressure for about an hour. When he returned to his normal state, he was panting, and more sweat poured down his forehead.

"If there are 99 sets of ruins like this, plus an intact Immortal pavilion, then that means that the more enlightenment I gain, the better my results will be when I create my divine ability."

"However... I'm only at the second ruin and it's already so difficult. I wonder how many ruins some of the others have reached enlightenment in." Meng Hao frowned and looked at the riverbed. Fighting back against the pressure with his willpower, he began to experience a vision.

He saw water flowing up into the sky, and boundless waves. This river seemed capable of shaking Heaven and Earth. As it flowed upward, it cut a huge rift through the sky.

"I bet if I can understand this river," he murmured to himself, "I'll be able to create a divine ability that has to do with flowing water. When I unleash it, a celestial river would appear all around me that would sweep over everything." After thinking about it, he decided that such a divine ability would definitely be powerful. Therefore, he continued to sit there cross-legged, silently trying to reach enlightenment.

However, after six hours flowed by, he opened his eyes in frustration. After all that time, he wasn't even able to organize his thoughts.

"When I look at the river, I know that it can lead to enlightenment about a divine ability, but I can't stop thinking about the river beneath Mount Daqing, the bottle gourd I threw into it, and the slip of paper that was

inside." Scratching his head in puzzlement, he remembered how he had written down his great aspiration onto that note, and how he still hadn't achieved that goal. He couldn't help but sigh. 1

"It seems this place doesn't suit me either," he thought.

Standing, he sent his divine sense out to look for more ruins.

Meanwhile, everyone out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea was watching the various scenes playing out on the Ancient Roads of the Nascent Soul, Spirit Severing, and Dao Seeking. Of course, everything was quite blurry; not even the Patriarchs from the various sects up in the starry sky palace could clearly see what was happening.

After all, these Immortal ruins were filled with incredible power. It wouldn't be until the various participants created their final divine ability that everyone outside would be able to see what was happening.

However, the audience was able to see the three Ancient Roads, and knew that all of the participants were trying to gain enlightenment from the ruins.

Up in the starry sky palace, the various Patriarchs were discussing the scenes on the screen.

"It seems most of the competitors are still immersed in studying their first Immortal ruin. I wonder what type of enlightenment will be gained by the person who studies the most!?"

"Well whoever that is, they will definitely be able to create an incredibly powerful divine ability, that much is certain."

"That's right, Sir Fan from the Ninth Sea God World gained enlightenment from 91 of the Immortal ruins. That was how he managed to create the stunning and peerless Mortal Sea Becomes Immortal! In the end, he got 19 stone steles!"

"Creating divine abilities has a lot to do with one's disposition. Grand and magnificent people create divine abilities that match their personality, whereas people with narrow thinking tend to make extreme divine abilities. Different personalities, different divine abilities."

It was at this point that the Patriarch from the Burning Incense Stick Society suddenly looked over at Meng Hao's screen. "Huh? Fang Mu has already gained enlightenment from two Immortal ruins!"

Shockingly, two bright dots could be seen on Meng Hao's screen.

Meanwhile, on the Ancient Road of the Nascent Soul, Fatty was sitting next to a woodpile, seemingly in a daze. The woodpile seemed ancient, as if it had existed for countless years, and was over three hundred meters tall, towering above the lands.

At the very top of the woodpile was a magic fungus!

It was an enormous magic fungus shaped like a millstone, completely violet in color, and emanating a fragrant aroma. Fatty swallowed, and then his eyes began to shine brightly.

"That thing is a treasure.... Just smell it and you can tell it's some Heavenly material or Earthly treasure." He immediately produced a flying sword from his bag of holding and sent it flying toward the magic fungus. The sword trembled as it neared, then was hit with a jolt that sent it flying back. The mushroom did not move one iota.

Fatty's eyes shone with determination, and he produced some more magical items, then pushed out hard with his cultivation base. After an hour passed, he had not even succeeded in breaking the magic fungus' skin.

"I don't believe it!" he said, leaping to his feet. Gritting his teeth, he flew up to the magic fungus and then opened his mouth ferociously and bit it.

When he bit down, he couldn't help but scream out in pain as he tumbled backward. Stars swam in his eyes, and his teeth felt as if they might shatter. Tears flowed down his cheeks, and his expression was much the same as that year back in the Violet Fate Sect when Meng Hao had concocted a special medicinal pill for him to eat.

"I won't back down!" he roared, flying forward again and using all the power he could summon from his cultivation base and focusing it on his treasure-like teeth. Once again, he bit down viciously onto the magic

fungus.

Pain washed over him, but Fatty endured it and surged with even more energy.

"There's nothing that Grandpa Fatty can't bite through!" he cried, his eyes shot with blood as he bit down even more viciously. It was fortunate that no one was here to witness what was happening, otherwise they would have been dumbstruck.

If someone were to paint this scene, it would depict Fatty, looking much like a wolfhound as he tore at the magic fungus with his teeth....

After biting it over and over again for an hour, Fatty let out a roar of rage and finally, was able to bite a tiny chunk out of the magic fungus.

His eyes were bright red as he chewed the magic fungus viciously and then swallowed it. He was just about to continue with his efforts when suddenly, a tremor ran through him, and he flopped over onto his back, unconscious.

After lying there unmoving for two hours, he finally opened his eyes, and they looked blank.

"What a dream!" he thought. "I saw myself creating a divine ability...." After a moment, his eyes began to shine with a bright light, and he resumed ripping at the magic fungus until he tore off another chunk, after which he passed out again.

The cycle repeated itself over and over again, so many times that even Fatty was unaware of how long it had been going on. Eventually, he had managed to eat about half of the magic fungus.

Also on the Ancient Road of the Nascent Soul was Chen Fan, who stood silently next to an enormous boulder. A brush could be seen in his hand, and his expression was blank, as if he were submerged in a reverie. Finally, he extended his hand and began to draw the image of a woman.

It was none other than his wife, Shan Ling.

"My spirit has darkened," he murmured, "but I won't forget love, not for

the rest of my life."

In another location was Wang Youcai, in front of whom was an enormous bronze mirror that looked completely and utterly ancient. He sat there cross-legged, staring at the image of himself in the mirror.

A vicious expression could be seen on his face, which was sometimes replaced by blankness, and then other times, an expression of enlightenment. He had already been sitting there for a long time.

His voice was hoarse as he said: "When I look at the world, when I look out at Heaven and Earth, I see the future, and I see the past.... However, I know that these eyes of mine can see more than that!" He almost appeared to be on the verge of going mad.

When Meng Hao, Dong Hu, and Wang Youcai had joined the Reliance Sect that year, Meng Hao could be described as quick-witted, Dong Hu as somber, and Wang Youcai as stubborn!

\*

In chapter 1, Meng Hao put a piece of paper in a gourd, and then threw it into the river. It was never explained what specifically was written on the piece of paper, but now we have a clue....

# Chapter 851: Loyal Personality

There was one other familiar person on the Ancient Road of the Nascent Soul, Li Shiqi.

She wore a long white robe, and walked slowly across the black soil, sending out divine sense until she found an Immortal ruin off in the distance.

She would not make her selection casually, nor rashly begin to test herself against the ruin. That was her personality.

After walking along for some time, she finally came across a blood-colored lake. At one time, the lake had been vast and deep, but now there wasn't much left to it.

At the very bottom, a bloody flower was visible.

It was an orchid that was as red as blood.

A Blood Orchid.

Li Shiqi looked at the orchid silently for a while, after which a gleam of determination appeared in her eyes, and she walked toward it. This was the first ruin she had selected. Now that she had made her decision, she would see it through to the end. That was her personality.

"There is much good fortune in this world," she murmured softly, "and I can't have all of it. I just want to find something that is suitable for me, that will be good enough." As she walked toward the Blood Orchid, she felt increasing pressure. Eventually, she sat down cross-legged, her expression blank as she submerged herself in contemplation.

Virtually all of the people on the three Ancient Roads were similarly deep in contemplation. Some were like Li Shiqi, who made her selection carefully. Others tried out one Immortal ruin after another.

Different personalities. Different paths.

Time passed. Everyone was fighting for their own future, attempting to gain enlightenment regarding their own personal divine ability. The

crowds outside in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were all watching closely and patiently. This was the creation of a divine ability, not some simple copy of some other magic. The more time one spent developing the divine ability, the more likely it would lead to something breathtaking.

“After these three stages, there will definitely be people who become famous overnight and draw the attention of all of the sects. There might even be some people, whether they are on the name lists or not, who be immediately recruited!”

“There will also be people who suffer disastrous failures and completely lose any advantage they previously had.”

“We definitely have to watch closely in case someone creates a ten-stele divine ability. In the future, that person will surely be deemed Chosen.”

Conversations like this played out in many of the various areas in the Ninth Mountain and Sea where people had gathered to watch the trial by fire. Some of those people were Chosen like Taiyang Zi, who had been to Planet South Heaven, but most of them were people who had never seen Meng Hao, only heard of his name.

As of this moment, all of these Chosen were watching the trial by fire with their own thoughts and feelings.

They knew that there very well might be people participating who in future days would be their competition within their own sect.

Time passed by. Soon, three days had passed. Meng Hao had already passed through 19 Immortal ruins, and after spending some time at each one had left disappointed and wondering if something was defective about him.

“It’s so depressing....” he said with a sigh. “How come the enlightenment I achieve at each of these ruins always has to do with spirit stones....” Currently, he was walking up to an enormous copper mirror, which, as soon as he laid eyes on it, filled him with the impulse to pull out a spirit stone and put it on the surface of the mirror.

After a moment, Meng Hao left the mirror, his face filled with

determination.

"Apparently each one of these ruins makes me involuntarily think about spirit stones. That inevitably leads to thinking about those promissory notes... Well then, I'll just make a divine ability that's completely unique!" Taking a deep breath, he made his decision, and his eyes began to shine with a strange light. The more he thought about it, the more sense his choice made.

His body flashed as he shot off toward another Immortal ruin.

More time went by. Fatty had passed out and regained consciousness numerous times during the past few days. Every time he awoke, he would grab hold of the mushroom and viciously chomp a few bites out of it. He was currently chewing the final mouthful of the magical fungus. Feeling a bit anxious about leaving anything behind, he bit a chunk out of the wooden stump that the mushroom had been growing out of, swallowed it down, and then passed out again with a sense of fulfillment and satisfaction, and a look of anticipation.

Chen Fan still stood in front of the boulder, painting his beloved wife. His brush moved with increasing quickness, and Shan Ling's image was becoming clearer and more and more lifelike with each brushstroke.

Wang Youcai continued to sit in front of the bronze mirror, his eyes bloodshot to the point where tears of blood were dripping down his face and onto his clothes. His entire body was trembling, and blue veins bulged out on his face and neck. His expression was savage and hideous.

"I can see more than this!!"

As Li Shiqi quietly stared at the Blood Orchid, her previously white clothes were beginning to turn red, the exact same red as the flower itself.

Three more days passed. Meng Hao had now passed through 39 Immortal ruins. It was at this point that rumbling echoed out from the Ancient Road of the Nascent Soul, and all the cultivators in the Ninth Mountain and Sea who were watching the Ancient Roads turned their attention to the Nascent Soul vortex screen with eagerness.

“Someone succeeded!”

“The sound’s coming from the Ancient Road of the Nascent Soul! I wonder how many stone steles will appear!”

The Patriarchs in the palace floating in the sky all began to look over.

On the Ancient Road of the Nascent Soul, an old man had lifted his head back and was laughing uproariously. He waved his hand, and all of the black-colored mud and soil around him suddenly lifted up into the air, then began to form together into a statue. It had three heads and six arms, and as soon as it fully coalesced, emanated a shocking might.

“I have gained the enlightenment of this barrow!” declared the man. “This soil contains spirits, spirits that I will transmogrify into the divine wills of the people who are buried here! This will become my divine ability, which I shall henceforth name... Descent of the Spirits!”

As the old man’s voice rang out, two stone steles rumbled out from the void to land in front of him. A powerful glow could be seen that filled the entire world, revealing everything clearly to the onlookers.

“Two stone steles.... Not bad! This guy’s pretty good!”

“He also used the least amount of time. Earlier, nobody really noticed him, but now people are going to start paying attention to him.” As the discussions continued among the spectators, the representatives from the various sects quickly began to add the old man’s name to their records.

However, even while the old man’s laughter was still ringing out, rumbling sounds could be heard from seven or eight other cultivators on the three various Ancient Roads, as they too completed their divine abilities.

Rumbling filled the air as one stone stele after another descended. In all cases, though, there were only two pillars, never three.

In the following days, more and more contestants completed their divine abilities, one after another. All of the three Ancient Roads were the same. At the very least, one stone stele appeared, and at the most, four, which of course attracted much attention.

Suddenly, on the seventh day, on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking, a roar could be heard unlike anything before it.

The old man with the age-transformation powers now bore the appearance of a middle-aged man, an age that was truly the prime of life. He floated in midair, performing an incantation gesture, causing an extra layer of skin to appear on him, which then began to peel off as if he was molting. These were not scattered bits of flesh, but a fully connected body of skin!

The skin seemed to be smiling, although that smile was horrifying to look at!

"I have created this divine ability, Life Possession!" he said coolly as he floated there in midair. "This skin that I have shed can possess the body of even a false Immortal!" Everything rumbled as eight stone steles descended.

Those eight steles caused wild colors to flash about, and sent the crowds out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea completely abuzz.

There were even several Patriarchs in the starry sky palace whose eyes shone with gleams of surprise.

"Eight stone steles! What a shocking creation!"

"He performed well in the previous stages, and now that he's created an eight-stele divine ability, it goes to show that he definitely has potential!"

"Hahaha! The Three Great Daoist Societies might not spare him a second glance, but the Seven Seas Sect must have disciples such as him."

The outside world was in an uproar, too. Eight stone steles was currently the most that had appeared for anyone.

Almost in the same moment as the eight stone steles descended, rumbling could be heard coming from the images of more people on the Ancient Roads trial, as if some specific critical point had been reached. More divine abilities appeared, although none of them caused eight steles to descend; at most, six appeared.

But then... an incredible noise rose up on the Ancient Road of the Nascent Soul, and everything began to tremble. Wind screamed and massive energy surged that stifled even the old man with the eight stone steles. Soon, all of the powerful experts in the outside world were looking over.

The source of the noise... was Fatty!

He hadn't made a very big impression in the previous stages, mostly because of his lack of control. Now, he opened his eyes, and while they seemed blank at first, it was possible to see that nearly half of the huge woodpile had been consumed; it appeared to be in a shambles.

Fatty rose numbly to his feet, then suddenly opened his mouth and took a deep breath. That breath caused the Heavens to tremble, and clouds to gather together. In the blink of an eye... an enormous mouth was visible up above.

The mouth was filled with numerous razor-sharp teeth, and as it bit down toward the ground, it grew larger and larger, until it was more than ten thousand meters wide. Everything trembled violently as the enormous mouth slashed through anything and everything to take an enormous bite.

Everyone on the outside looked on with wide eyes and slack jaws.

It was at this point that the Heavens rippled as thirteen stone steles descended, rumbling, from up above. They were floating in the air around Fatty as his eyes grew clear from his previous reverie.

"Thirteen stone steles! What... what divine ability did that fat guy create?!?!"

"Thirteen stone steles! That's second only to Sir Fan from back in the day! This little fatty is extraordinary! I never imagined that he would have such powerful intuition!!"

In the palace in the starry sky, the sect Patriarchs were all watching with wide eyes. Even the Three Daoist Societies were shocked. It was at this point that the Patriarch from the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum, one of the Five Holy Lands, suddenly rose to his feet. It was with incredible speed,

and before anyone could react, that he shot forward and disappeared into the screen up ahead.

There were four other Patriarchs who stood up, but they weren't fast enough, and the Patriarch from the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum suddenly appeared in the world in front of Fatty. He had long gray hair that draped down over his shoulders, and wore a long robe.

"What is the name of this divine ability?!" he asked as soon as he materialized. He immediately waved his hand, causing the entire area to be locked down so that no one else could enter.

Fatty started shivering.

"I'm not sure," he replied, unsure of how this old man had appeared in front of him. "I just ate some of that wood, and the magical fungus, then I had a dream about being really hungry, and my gums were itching and I constantly felt like I had to file my teeth and eat stuff."

"Excellent, excellent. A loyal personality and an excellent divine ability. Henceforth, it shall be known as Gulping Down Heaven!"

"Are you willing to join the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum as one of our disciples?!" The old man's eyes shone with a mysterious and approving light as he looked at Fatty.

"Uh, alright," replied Fatty, blinking. Then he asked, "But... but what about all my beloved concubines back home? Can they come with me?"

"As I thought, you're a man who values relationships. Don't worry. Your concubines may also join the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum!" With an emotional sigh, the old man waved his hand. Fatty was covered with a brilliant light, and then he vanished, and the world around him collapsed. Back in the palace in the starry sky, the various Patriarchs weren't very happy, but there was nothing they could do.

# Chapter 852: Flowers in Full Bloom

The other Patriarchs were angrily grumbling in the palace up in the starry sky.

“Dammit, I was just a bit too slow and lost out on a potential star! He got snatched away!”

In the outside world, great waves of shock rolled about as a consequence of Fatty being taken as a disciple.

“What was that fat guy’s name again? I can’t believe he got taken as a disciple by the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum, one of the Five Great Holy Lands!”

“I’m pretty sure his name is Li Fugui. His life is sure going to be different from now on!”

“Considering he made a thirteen-stele divine ability, that Li Fugui is definitely Chosen. Think about it; it won’t be long before he has a cultivation base breakthrough. Eventually, he’ll definitely get to Dao Seeking, and then he’ll then move on to Immortality!”

“But what about that tree stump he was on top of? How come it had all those bite marks, as if a dog had been chewing on the wood? Was it like that from the beginning?”

All of the spectators outside in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were shaken inwardly. Some couldn’t figure out what to think, others were filled with envy.

As the discussions continued, another rumbling sound could be heard from the Ancient Road of the Nascent Soul. This time, it came from Li Shiqi. By now, her garments were entirely the color of blood. She sat cross-legged next to the Blood Orchid, almost as if she herself had become a part of it!

She opened her eyes, and in that moment, the Blood Orchid... completely wilted!

When that happened, Li Shiqi’s countenance shone with unprecedented

spirit and vigor. Instantly, her cultivation base rose up, pushing her immeasurably close to Spirit Severing.

At first, she looked confused, but once she regained clarity, she performed an incantation with her delicate hand and then pointed up into the air. All the Heavens up above turned blood red, and a Blood Orchid materialized over her and slowly began to bloom.

Rumbling echoed out, and one stone stele after another descended from the blood-red Heavens. One, two, three... ten, twelve... thirteen....

In the end, fourteen stone steles fell from up above to stand tall in the earth around Li Shiqi, causing everything to tremble and shake. As Li Shiqi rose to her feet, she was the complete focus of all attention.

The audiences in the Ninth Mountain and Sea exploded into an uproar.

"Heavens! She's even more shocking than that fat guy! Fourteen stone steles!!"

"She was enlightened about the Blood Orchid? The Church of the Blood Orchid is definitely going to go crazy! They won't hesitate to pay any price to recruit her!"

"How could it be that two Chosen appeared on the Ancient Road of the Nascent Soul? Neither of them were very eye-catching before, and yet now, they're so shocking!"

When Fatty made his debut, five Patriarchs in the starry sky palace had flown out, including the Patriarch from the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum. Now, however, seven people flew into the air. No one from the Three Great Daoist Societies had moved a muscle. However, even the Patriarch from Moonset Lake, one of the Five Great Holy Lands, was in motion.

The seven Patriarchs reached the screen at the same time, and then all of them appeared in front of Li Shiqi in the world of the trial by fire.

"Girl, are you willing to join the Moonset Lake, one of the Five Great Holy Lands?!"

"The Five Great Holy Lands already have plenty of Chosen," said another

of the seven. “If you join them, you might never be able to distinguish yourself. Based on your powers of understanding, you could definitely be an Empress of this generation in the Church of the Immortal Emperor!” Everyone was now trying to recruit Li Shiqi.

It was at this point that an old man wearing a blood-colored robe suddenly spoke up.

“You were enlightened regarding the Blood Orchid, and used that to create a divine ability. This shows that you have destiny connecting you to the Church of the Blood Orchid. Join us, and you will be in line to become our Holy Daughter!” The other six Patriarchs present were all shocked. The cultivators recruited from within the trial by fire usually had to pass through a probationary period. However, the Patriarch from the Church of the Blood Orchid offered to make a candidate their Holy Daughter, which was not in keeping with the general rule. However, considering she had been enlightened regarding the Blood Orchid, the others could understand.

Li Shiqi looked quietly for a moment at the old man from the Church of the Blood Orchid. Finally, she made a curtseying bow.

“Senior, I am Li Shiqi, and I am willing to join the Church of the Blood Orchid.”

The uproar in the outside world grew even more intense. Li Shiqi left with the Patriarch from the Church of the Blood Orchid, after which all the cultivators from that organization knew that a young woman named Li Shiqi was like the fish who had jumped over the dragon gate, and had successfully passed her examination.

In the future, her glory would likely exceed that of Li Fugui. She had gained enlightenment of the Blood Orchid, and had then created a divine ability from it. To the Church of the Blood Orchid, which had been established because of the Blood Orchid itself, this definitely qualified her to be a candidate to become a Holy Daughter.

By this time, Meng Hao had passed through 72 Immortal ruins. Fewer people were paying attention to him because of all the commotion caused

by Fatty and Li Shiqi. However, some people with especially high cultivation bases were the type to consider the future, and look deeply into matters.

They did not participate in the various discussions, but when they saw Meng Hao gaining enlightenment from so many Immortal ruins, they were inwardly shocked. The Patriarchs in the palace were also paying attention to this, although no one took the initiative to say anything about it.

By now it was obvious that if any of the other sects tried to fight over someone like Meng Hao, they would be forced to offend the Three Great Daoist Societies. After all... the Three Great Daoist Societies were in charge of the entire trial by fire.

Everyone well knew that in the assessment of divine ability creation, only those with wild ambitions could gain enlightenment from so many Immortal ruins. Regardless of whether it be on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking, Spirit Severing, or the Nascent Soul, there were few people who walked the same path as Meng Hao. Most others gained enlightenment from a handful at most, which was a vast difference from Meng Hao.

As people in the outside world discussed the matter of Li Shiqi and Fatty, Wang Youcai sat cross-legged in front of the bronze mirror. His eyes were completely red, and continuously dripped with blood. His body was trembling, almost as if he were possessed.

"I can see even more! I can see everything....

"My latent talent doesn't measure up to Dong Hu, and my cultivation base is not as good as Meng Hao's. But I refuse to back down!" More blood built up in Wang Youcai's eyes, and his pupils seemed on the verge of exploding.

"This is my only chance. In the past several stages, nobody was paying attention to me. But now... I WILL rise to prominence!

"I want to see... everything! I want to see all destinies. My eyes will see what lies beyond the Heavens, and past the underworld that lies beneath the Earth!" Blood flowed out of his eyes continuously, and his pupils were

beginning to shatter.

After ten breaths of time... a rumbling sound could be heard from the world in which Wang Youcai sat. At the same time, Wang Youcai's murmuring voice could be heard.

"I can see now...." In the instant he spoke the words, his eyes suddenly collapsed into pieces. Everything in front of him went black, and from this instant, was gone for all eternity. As his eyes shattered, he closed them.

The shattering occurred in a split second, and as it did, the world around Wang Youcai cracked and... exploded into pieces.

As everything fell apart, he rose to his feet. Stone steles were descended through the shattered canopy above, one after another. By now, all attention on the outside world was focused on Wang Youcai.

They saw the world shatter, and saw the stone steles descended, and everyone gasped.

One, five, ten, thirteen, fifteen....

A total of sixteen stone steles descended, swirling around Wang Youcai, who stood there quietly with his eyes closed.

"Henceforth, my eyes shall remain closed in perpetuity. Should they open, Heaven and Earth will experience shocking changes!"

"My divine ability, is called.... Blackest Night."

As Wang Youcai's voice rang out, the Ninth Mountain and Sea looked on in astonishment.

"Sixteen stone steles! There are actually sixteen stone steles!"

"That's Heaven-defying! From ancient times until now, the only person who ever exceeded that is Sir Fan of the Ninth Sea God World, whose exploits are recorded in the ancient records!!"

"I bet even the Three Great Daoist Societies are shocked!"

In the starry sky palace, many of the Patriarchs of the various sects gasped as they watched Wang Youcai. Even they were shocked by what

they were seeing.

"He destroyed his own eyes to create a divine ability, leaving him blind! However, considering his battle prowess, even though he's in the Nascent Soul stage, he's capable of slaughtering Spirit Severing! When he reaches Dao Seeking, if he opens his eyes, the result will be shocking."

"How ruthless! How stubborn!"

Ten people flew toward the display screens with incredible speed. The fastest was the Patriarch from Moonset Lake. However, he did not enter the screen, but rather turned and clasped hands to everyone else.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, Fellow Daoists, the Daoist magic of Moonset Lake is quite suitable for this child. After the moon sets, there is no light in the sky. Instead, the black night is endlessly deep. I request... that you please do not fight with me over this child!"

"Daoist Elders of the Three Great Daoist Societies, if you give some face to Moonset Lake, then we promise to repay the favor in future days!" He clasped hands and bowed deeply, his expression very somber. Everyone else stopped in their tracks, their eyes glittering. No one spoke, but instead looked toward the Patriarchs from the Three Great Daoist Societies.

The Patriarch from the Ninth Sea God World thought for a moment and then nodded his head. "I take no issue."

Sitting in the center position of the Patriarchs from the Three Great Daoist Societies was an old man who had the bearing of a transcendent being. He wore a white robe, and had a calm expression. Immortal qi swirled around him as he said, "There is a person here who has destiny with the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite. However, he will not join us during this trial by fire. Actually, the only reason I agreed to hold this event was to see him. The person you have mentioned is not him, so I will do nothing to stop you."

Next to him was an old man from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto. He smiled slightly, a smile that seemed somewhat cold and almost looked like a fierce sword.

"I have also taken a liking to this child, but... huh?" The old man from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto had just begun speaking when suddenly, his face flickered, and he looked over at the screens. Next to him, the Patriarchs from the Ninth Sea God World and the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite did the same.

"91!"

"He's gained enlightenment from 91 Immortal ruins!"

On the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking, Meng Hao stood in a tall pagoda. When his eyes opened, they seemed confused, but quickly regained clarity. Without pause, he left and headed in another direction.

He sent his divine sense out, looking for more Immortal ruins, eventually finding the 92nd, and then the 93rd....

Time passed by on the Ancient Roads. One person after another created their divine abilities, but none were as shocking as those which had occurred earlier. Chen Fan created his divine ability, but only eight stone steles descended in response.

At any other time, it would have been shocking, but at this point, it was nothing especially noteworthy.

Time passed, and now more attention was being paid to the participants who had not created their divine abilities yet, but were still continuing to gain enlightenment from the Immortal ruins. Everyone understood that these people would either fail, or would have Heaven-defying results.

Once again, Meng Hao became the center of attention. By now, the number of Immortal ruins he had gained enlightenment from had exceeded that of Sir Fan!

"96!!"

"Does he really seem like the kind of person who can gain enlightenment from all 99 ruins? From ancient times until now, less than a hundred people have ever done that! Of course, of all those people, Sir Fan was the only person that ended up creating a nineteen-stele divine ability!"

“No one else could measure up to Sir Fan. I wonder how many stone steles... will descend when Fang Mu creates his divine ability!?”

# Chapter 853: Nine Bridges!

Outside in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, everyone was watching Meng Hao and discussing his progress.

“Maybe he’ll outdo Wang Youcai from earlier. Or who knows, maybe he won’t match up!”

“There’s no way he’ll come in behind Wang Youcai. From ancient times until now, less than a hundred people have ever gained enlightenment from more than 90 Immortal Ruins!”

“You can tell that this Fang Mu has terrifying divine sense and incredible willpower. The final creation of his divine ability will truly be a test of his intuition!”

In the palace in the starry sky, each and every one of the various Patriarchs were also staring fixedly at the screen that represented Meng Hao’s area.

While everyone paid such close attention to the screens, Meng Hao was standing atop a towering cliff. His eyes opened, and his expression was blank like before. Then he headed off into another direction.

Nearby the cliff were the ruins of an archaic temple. This was the 97th Immortal ruin he had gained enlightenment from, which then caused another dot of light to appear on his screen in the outside world. That immediately sent everyone into an uproar.

“97 Immortal ruins! This Fang Mu defies the Heavens!”

“I can’t wait to see whether or not he can create an even more Heaven-defying divine ability!”

“It’s not guaranteed. Of all the people who have done a similar thing, only Sir Fan followed up with a peerless divine ability!”

As for all the other people who were going about the trial by fire in the same way as Meng Hao, the person with the next greatest amount of Immortal ruins under their belt only had 83!

That was the young man in the mask. Had Meng Hao not participated in the trial by fire, he would definitely have been the complete center of attention in the previous stages, and would now be in first place.

Meng Hao's appearance on the scene cast him in the shadows.

Currently, he had no idea what was going on outside his own world. His expression was one of determination as he gritted his teeth and continued onward. He left the 83rd Immortal ruin and then began to search for another.

As more time passed, they made slower and slower progress. It took a few days before Meng Hao finally regained his senses in the 97th Immortal Ruin. After sitting there cross-legged for some time, he slowly rose to his feet and made his way to a different location, a deep crater.

Glittering light could be seen deep within the crater, as if, years in the past, a meteor had smashed down here.

This was not a location that just anyone could find. Anyone who did find it would find it difficult to endure the pressure. Only Meng Hao, with his incredible divine sense and shocking willpower, was able to descend into the crater and then sit down cross-legged.

“98!” The crowds in the outside world were shocked, and the Patriarchs in the starry sky palace looked on with glittering eyes.

“After this, there’s only one more, and that will be all 99!”

“From ancient times until now, no one in the Spirit Realm has ever gained enlightenment from so many Immortal ruins on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking!”

“Who exactly is this Fang Mu?! Where is he from? If he can really pull it off, his fame will shake all of the Ninth Mountain!” The outside world was abuzz, but the palace in the starry sky was dead silent.

All of the Patriarchs from the various sects were paying close attention, and none of them were speaking.

As for the other competitors in the trial by fire, no one was paying

attention to any of them. Even the masked young man, who had just reached the 88th Immortal ruin, was behind Meng Hao, who was clearly in first place.

Five days passed!

Meng Hao slowly opened his eyes. He looked exhausted, and even more blank than before. This time, he had teetered on the edge of not awakening. The crater was filled with chunks and fragments of stone, each one of which emitted different auras, which had combined together to transform into an ancient vortex that influenced the mind.

It was as if he had been experiencing a Daoist magic that came straight from an ancient era. Someone had waved a hand, and a star up above was crushed down into a meteor, which then slammed into the ground.

The massive blow had cracked the land, and shattered some of the heavenly bodies up above. In that instant, Meng Hao had felt as if his own divine sense were being ripped to shreds. It was only by virtue of his intense willpower that he was able to claw his way back to lucidity.

“More and more difficult....” he thought. “I’ve already gained enlightenment from 98 Immortal ruins. According to what Ling Yunzi said, there are a total of 99 Immortal ruins, and after that, an intact Immortal pavilion!

“But, after sending my divine sense out, I can sense the final Immortal ruin, but not any Immortal pavilion.

“Unfortunately, even with my divine sense, I’m only able to sense the general direction of that final Immortal ruin, and not anything specific about it. However, I have a premonition that it... is very dangerous!” After a moment, he stood up and walked silently out of the crater. After that, he stood on the edge of the crater, thinking.

He was currently hesitating about whether to continue onward, or just make his divine ability right here. By this point, he already had some ideas about what type of divine ability he wanted to create.

After a moment, his eyes shone with decisiveness. He was not the type of

person to back down easily. Even if the danger was great, he was stubborn. Were that not the case, he would not have been able to travel the long path from being a scholar to possessing eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal!

“The more powerful the divine ability, the more stone steles will descend. And I need stone steles!” Meng Hao took a deep breath, ceased any thoughts of hesitation, then headed off in the direction of the 99th Immortal ruin, as indicated by his divine sense.

Although he didn’t know the specific location, Meng Hao was confident that he would be able to find it. He just needed to expend a little bit of time.

One day. Two days. Three days....

The palace in the starry sky was completely silent as the Patriarchs of the various sects looked on.

Then, an archaic voice echoed out within the palace. This person had not spoken at all yet, nor had he attempted to solicit recruits. It was an old man from the Kunlun Society.

“Can he find the 99th Immortal ruin? Actually, I’m very curious about something. This 99th ruin which is shared by all three Ancient Roads... what exactly does it look like?

“Fellow Daoists of the Three Great Daoist Societies, could you quell my curiosity?”

Were it any other sect that inquired about the matter, the Three Great Daoist Societies would pay no heed to the question. But the Kunlun Society was different. The three Patriarchs from the Three Great Daoist Societies exchanged glances, after which the old man from the Ninth Sea God World spoke up.

“According to the legends, during the great war, the three exalted Paragons united all of the Immortal Ancient Doyens. They extracted all of the Immortal qi from the world and sacrificed it to a boundless spirit, which was the fallen... Pāramitā Heaven-treading Foundation!” 1

These words provoked a collective gasp from all of the Patriarchs. Looks of astonishment appeared on their faces, and some of them even rose to their feet.

“WHAT?!”

“The legendary Pāramitā Foundation?”

The Kunlun Society elder’s eyes went wide. He said nothing, but from his expression, he was clearly shaken.

Time passed, and Meng Hao continued to search for the 99th Immortal ruin. More people created divine abilities on the three Ancient Roads. There were also people who failed, and chose to give up.

Seven days later, there were only seven people on the three Ancient Roads who had yet to create a divine ability!

Those seven people were now the subject of intense scrutiny. Everyone was watching to see what would happen. There was one person on the Ancient Road of the Nascent Soul, two people on the Ancient Road of Spirit Severing, and the remaining four were on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking.

One of them was the young man in the mask, another was the cultivator with the mosquitos.

“If anybody in this trial by fire can exceed twenty stone steles, it’s one of these seven!”

“See that one, with 90 Immortal ruins? His name is Li Yan, that cultivator with the mask. He’s yet another that has gained enlightenment of 90!!” 2

“This is really incredible. Now there’s a second person in this trial by fire who has acquired enlightenment from 90 Immortal ruins!”

There were many cries of shock in the crowds in the outside world as quite a few people began to pay attention to the masked young man, Li Yan. As for the Patriarchs in the starry sky palace, they too would occasionally glance away from Meng Hao to look at the masked young

man's screen.

Currently, Meng Hao was making his way through the world, following the direction of his divine sense as he searched for the 99th Immortal ruin. He had already searched for seven days, and felt certain that he had thoroughly explored all of the areas indicated by his divine sense. Despite that, he still hadn't found the ruin.

"Just... where is it?" Suddenly, Meng Hao stopped in place. Frowning, he looked around silently, and then simply closed his eyes. He sent his divine sense out again, and could vaguely sense that there were Immortal ruins up ahead of him. When he opened his eyes, he saw nothing.

Muttering to himself, he closed his eyes again. Then, without opening his eyes, he began to walk forward. It was using this method that he proceeded on for about two hours until, suddenly, his body trembled.

He did not open his eyes, and yet, was able to see something incredible with his divine sense, right there in front of him.

He saw... nine bridges! 3

Nine incredibly shocking bridges that seemed to rise above the heavens. The sight of these bridges was unmatchably astonishing as they rose up into the air, each one higher than the one before it. They formed something that almost looked like a staircase, linking up into the boundless starry sky.

As he examined the bridges with his divine sense, Meng Hao gradually got the feeling that if someone could tread these nine bridges all the way to their end, then that person would definitely become matchlessly powerful.

Meng Hao's body was trembling; there was an indescribable pressure radiating out from the bridges, something that seemed capable of crushing him in an instant. Right now, it wasn't being sent out at full force, but rather, simply swirling around the bridges.

Even still, Meng Hao coughed up a mouthful of blood and staggered backward several paces. He had the intense sensation that these nine

bridges were actually incomplete. Were they intact, then even looking at them would destroy him in body and spirit.

“What exactly are these bridges?!?!” he gasped, not daring to open his eyes. He carefully observed with his divine sense, and began to experience a vision.

He saw illusory images of things that had happened countless years in the past. He saw a figure that looked like a sun attempting to tread on the bridges. However, before he could get past the first bridge, he shattered into countless pieces.

He saw an old man with white hair, who radiated boundless coldness. He stepped onto the first bridge, then the second....

As he proceeded higher and higher, he became more and more powerful. In the end, all the colors in the sky and the land faded. The ninth bridge began to tremble, as if it couldn’t stand up to the old man’s steps.

The old man reached the end and stood atop the final bridge. Then he turned, and Meng Hao was able to clearly see his eyes. In that instant, Meng Hao’s mind filled with roaring.

Blood sprayed from his mouth, and he once again staggered back. When he lifted his head back up, he unhesitatingly opened his eyes.

As soon as his eyes opened, the nine bridges vanished. The air up ahead of him was absolutely empty, devoid of any object.

“This place is the location of the 99th Immortal ruin!” Meng Hao was panting, and his eyes glowed with a strange light. He wiped the blood from his mouth, sat down cross-legged, and rotated his cultivation base to begin healing his injuries.

It was at this point that, in the outside world, 99 dots of light appeared on the screen which represented him in the outside world!

1. Here is some more information about Pāramitā [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/P%C4%81ramit%C4%81]. Also, I translated Pāramitā as “resurrection” in the Resurrection Lily. When I first researched the Resurrection Lily, I came across references to Pāramitā in connection to the lily. It could have been translated Pāramitā Flower or Pāramitā Lily. However, the “Pāramitā Lily” is a real flower which (in real life) is sometimes called a resurrection lily, because of how the dead flowers once again bloom in summer. In any case, to forestall any confusion, the Pāramitā referenced here does not have a connection to the Resurrection Lily, and I think in this situation, Pāramitā is definitely the more accurate translation.
2. Li Yan’s name in Chinese is 离炎 lí yán – Li means, among other things, “depart.” Yan means “flame” or “scorching”.
3. This is not the first time nine bridges have been mentioned in the story. Check out chapter 437.

# Chapter 854: Secret Clues!

"He found it!" In the palace, the old men from the Three Great Daoist Societies were all watching with brightly shining eyes. This was especially true of the old man from the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite, whose entire face glowed with unprecedented brightness.

"He is the first person from ancient times until now to tread the Ancient Road with a Spirit Realm cultivation base and find the Pāramitā Heavenly Foundation!"

"He can only observe from a distance, not get near. Based on his divine sense and willpower, he should be able to determine that it isn't safe. He won't brazenly get close."

"That depends on his good fortune. In these worlds of the sixth, seventh, and eighth stages, time passes differently than in the outside world. Actually, contemplating enlightenment for one day in there is like spending ten years at it out here!"

Murmured conversations filled the palace.

In contrast, the crowds in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were buzzing with chatter.

When they saw the 99th dot of light, everyone knew exactly what it meant. Everyone was in an uproar, and now, the name Fang Mu was deeply imprinted in the hearts of everyone present.

Even as everyone on the outside was in a tumult, Meng Hao opened his eyes. He breathed heavily for a moment, then gritted his teeth and closed his eyes again. He sent his divine sense out to once again observe the nine astonishing bridges.

The bridges appeared to be complete, but Meng Hao knew that if they had been, he would have been killed simply by looking at them. Right now, even observing them from a distance caused him to be injured. Actually, it was a good thing the bridges were broken down. Otherwise, considering his cultivation base, as soon as his divine sense touched them, he would

have been completely annihilated.

"Nine Heaven-defying bridges like this were actually destroyed.... These are no mere bridges! They were obviously especially created to allow cultivators to experience incredible cultivation base growth, to be able to punch through to an incredible realm of power!"

"I never imagined that I would be able to see something like this here! This is extremely good fortune for me!" As he thought about it, Meng Hao's mind suddenly trembled.

"There was never any rule about only being able to create one divine ability.... In that case, why not create two?" Originally, Meng Hao had already devised a plan to create a divine ability, but after seeing the nine bridges, a new form of enlightenment had appeared in his mind, which then transformed into the shape of a divine ability. Furthermore, he didn't wish to give up on either of the two ideas.

The first divine ability aligned perfectly with his personality. As for the second one, Meng Hao sincerely desired to possess it.

He took a deep breath and then decided to stop thinking about it. He focused his divine sense on the nine bridges, and on resisting the pressure. Not only was he imprinting the image of the bridge onto his mind, he decided to try to get a bit closer, to acquire a bit of good fortune from the pressure weighing down.

Time slowly passed by.

Ten days later, only four people remained. The other three had finally realized they couldn't continue to gain enlightenment from the Immortal ruins, and had decided to create their divine abilities. Of those three, the individual who had found the most Immortal ruins had found 76.

The divine abilities they created were powerful. One of them caused eleven stone steles to descend, which provoked a lot of attention.

Ten more days passed, and of the four remaining people on the Ancient Roads, two of them could not continue, and chose to create their divine abilities. One of them was the young man with the mosquitos, who had

found 89 Immortal ruins. At that point, he created a thirteen-stele divine ability.

Quite a few people were astonished by this, and the young man quickly rose to prominence.

As of this moment, there were only two people left on the Ancient Road. One of them was Meng Hao, and the other was the young man in the mask, Li Yan!

Li Yan had already found the 93rd Immortal ruin, and was now the second person in the trial by fire to have exceeded Sir Fan.

He and Meng Hao were the focus of the attention of the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Three more days passed. Meng Hao coughed up some blood, and his vision went blurry. During the more than twenty days that had passed, he had sustained injuries on multiple occasions as he forced himself to continue to contemplate the nine bridges, and imprint their image on his mind.

It was difficult, but with his intense willpower, he was slowly but surely able to continue to grind away. He was not so wildly ambitious that he intended to commit all nine bridges to memory, only the first one.

Finally, the twenty-first day arrived. In this special location, contemplating enlightenment for that amount of time was like spending more than two hundred years on the outside. Rumbling filled Meng Hao's mind, and his eyes shone with the glow of enlightenment as the full image of the first bridge materialized in front of him.

In that instant, deep within his mind, he was able to sense exactly how damaged the bridge was. Suddenly, ninety-nine percent of the bridge actually vanished, and he found that the first bridge was actually... nothing more than a fist-sized rock!

It was a mere stone, but even looking at it caused Meng Hao to cough up blood, and he knew that if he approached it, he would be destroyed in body and spirit. These more than twenty days of contemplation were like

two hundred or more years in the outside world.

In the moment that he understood the real situation regarding the first bridge, and the outline of the bridge itself appeared in his mind, images began to appear in his eyes, a vision.

Within the vision were nine enormous suns hauling an astonishing statue. They seemed so large that they were impossible to see the ends of. An army of countless cultivators lashed out with attacks that ripped a huge hole in the air, which they then entered.

Behind the shocking statue were nine astonishing bridges that shook the heavens. Boundless light that covered everything radiated off of them.

The scene caused Meng Hao's mind to tremble, and reminded him of the things he had seen back in the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple. Some of the images were almost exactly the same. 1

Then, the vision changed. He saw a world-shaking war. Countless living things were being slaughtered, and heavenly bodies collapsed. The starry sky shattered, and in every breath of time, endless numbers of lives perished.

The nine bridges exerted incredible pressure, causing the starry sky to begin to collapse. Next, Meng Hao saw three enormous figures appear up above. When they joined forces, the starry sky disappeared, and the world went black, as if all the auras in existence were absorbed, condensed to form nine mountains, which then crushed down toward the nine bridges.

The bridges... shattered!

The vision abruptly ended. Meng Hao had no time to thoroughly analyze the images before they vanished. He was left standing there, his jaw slack, his eyes wide. His mind was blank and trembling.

"Those nine mountains...." Meng Hao was panting. From what he could sense, he had only been able to glimpse a tiny bit of some huge secret.

"Why does the world I live in consist of only nine mountains and nine seas, with four planets circling around each of those mountains?!"

"I never thought about it too much before, but how come Planet South Heaven is so special? Why did that Outsider want my parents to guard it?!"

"Also, what about that place I went to underneath the Ancient Dao Lakes on Planet South Heaven? That being which was crushed and then sealed there said something like... Immortals are the source of all chaos! 2

"What exactly does that mean?!" Meng Hao's breathing was unprecedently ragged, and he was shivering all over. He now had an idea of what it all meant, but didn't dare to consider that it was true.

As his mind trembled, the nine bridges in front of him vanished. This time, they really were gone; even when Meng Hao searched with his divine sense, he was unable to find them.

After a long moment of silence, Meng Hao sighed lightly. The matter of the vision was something far removed from the current situation, and considering the level of his cultivation base, he wasn't really qualified to begin to probe such secrets.

"One day, I'll understand it all!" he thought, his eyes shining with determination. He took a deep breath and sent his divine sense out one last time. Seeing that it was impossible to locate the bridges, he decided to search for the Immortal pavilion that Ling Yunzi had mentioned.

Several days later, he still remained empty handed. No matter what methods he used, even closing his eyes, he was unable to detect any Immortal pavilion. In fact, he was now fairly certain that he would be unable to find it at all, so he decided to sit down cross-legged in the location where the nine bridges had stood, and begin to create his divine ability!

He quickly slipped into a trance.

Many ideas and thoughts flitted through his mind, as well as numerous flickering images. The enlightenment he had received in the 99 Immortal ruins began to merge together, until finally, a will exploded out from within his mind that was a divine ability belonging solely to him.

As Meng Hao was piecing together the enlightenment to create a divine

ability, Li Yan had passed the 95th Immortal ruin, but could not find the 96th.

After a while, he had no choice but to stop regretfully and begin to create his divine ability.

By this point, everyone out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, as well as the Patriarchs in the starry sky palace, were now waiting to see what types of divine abilities Meng Hao and Li Yan would create.

There was something else going on that nobody in the palace noticed. Although the elders from the Three Great Daoist Societies seemed to be looking at the vortex screens with glittering eyes, deep within their gazes could be seen faint sighs of disappointment.

Such sighs were deeply hidden, yet seemed to be a disappointment that was not entirely unexpected.

Days passed, and the anticipation among the audience out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea only continued to grow.

“Just what types of divine abilities are Fang Mu and Li Yan creating? Which one will have the most stone steles?!”

“My guess is Fang Mu. After all, he gained enlightenment from 99 Immortal ruins. That’s unheard of!”

“It won’t necessarily be Fang Mu. It could be that he just took advantage of some lucky situations. In the end, I bet the best divine ability will be created by Li Yan!”

“If neither of them can create a sixteen-stele divine ability, then that means Wang Youcai will take first place in the sixth, seventh, and eighth stages!”

Two more days passed, when suddenly the area around the masked Li Yan burst into flames.

The flames were black, and instantly set the Heavens ablaze. Li Yan’s eyes opened, and his pupils were composed entirely of fire!

Flames roared all around him, covering the land, burning everything.

The entire world became a sea of flames, and then began to melt, as if it couldn't sustain the heat. The people outside in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were now able to clearly see Li Yan and everything that was happening in his world.

Gasps rang out from many areas in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, and in the palace in the starry sky, the Patriarchs looked on with strange gleams in their eyes. The old man from the Bones of the Flamedevil, one of the Five Great Holy Lands, couldn't help but observe with wide, glowing eyes.

"Li Yan is incredible! What type of flame divine ability did he create? It can actually melt the entire world!"

"He'll definitely get at least sixteen steles. His divine ability appears to be on a similar level as Wang Youcui's, but from the feel of it, it's more powerful!"

Li Yan slowly stood, a proud expression on his face beneath the mask. Then, he breathed in three times.

Each breath caused everything to tremble, and the flame sea to spread out even farther. After three breaths, the entire world was engulfed in flames. Finally, Li Yan inhaled deeply.

When he inhaled, all of the flames in the world began to churn and boil, tumbling toward Li Yan as he sucked them into his body.

Next, a rumbling sound emanated out from his body, and although no one could see any flames, when they looked at Li Yan himself, it caused them to feel twinges of pain like that caused by fire.

"A body magic!"

"Heavens! That's the most difficult thing to create! A body magic!!"

"It's not just any body magic, that's almost a Daoist magic!"

"Although it's not a complete Daoist magic, it's definitely unique. If in the future he continues to cultivate it to the peak, there's a high likelihood he could refine it into a true legacy Daoist magic!!"

1. Meng Hao saw similar things in the vision in [chapter 819](#).
2. I think this might be a slipup on Er Gen's part. In the scene underneath the Ancient Dao Lakes in [chapter 731](#), nothing is mentioned about Immortals being the source of chaos. I double checked with the original Chinese and didn't see anything to that effect. The only similar words were actually uttered by that monkey in [chapter 789](#), and were heard by Meng Hao in his other vision in [chapter 819](#). I'll continue to check into this to see if there's a reference I missed, and if any of you readers happen to know, please feel free to leave a comment.

# Chapter 855: A Bit of Karma!

Everyone in the Ninth Mountain and Sea was completely shaken. In the starry sky palace, the Patriarchs of the various sects looked on with strange gleams in their eyes. The elder from the Holy Land of the Bones of the Flamedevil chuckled and rose to his feet.

"Presumably, this young man is not the type to be selected by the Three Great Daoist Societies. This magic is connected by destiny to the Bones of the Flamedevil. Ladies and Gentlemen, I humbly request that you do not compete with me in this matter." Even as he spoke, the old man moved with incredible speed. However, at the same time, eight or nine other people sped forward.

Of the Five Great Holy Lands, Wang Youcai and Fatty had been taken by the Moonset Lake and the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum respectively. Up to now, only the Blue Lotus Sky, Mount Sun, and the Bones of the Flamedevil hadn't truly made a move. Now, though, they sprang into action.

Even as they neared Li Yan's world, rumbling echoed out as multiple stone steles descended. One, three, five, seven....

In total, seventeen stone steles appeared!!

One more than Wang Youcai!

Each one of the seventeen stone steles was fully three hundred meters tall, and as they spun around Li Yan, they turned into a vortex that sent light towering up into the sky. Li Yan stood in the middle of it all, surrounded by the boundless glow, looking like an unparalleled Chosen.

When the crowds out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea saw the seventeen stone steles, they were completely shocked.

"From ancient times until now, he's second only to Sir Fan!"

"Seventeen stone steles! He's definitely worthy to have been enlightened regarding 95 Immortal ruins! He created a body magic that summoned seventeen stone steles!"

"It's impossible to predict what kind of future he will have, especially

since his cultivation base is at the peak of Dao Seeking. Once he joins a sect, he'll get some training and will definitely become an incredible Chosen!"

All sorts of envious and jealous comments could be heard echoing out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. In Li Yan's world, the Patriarchs from the various sects had arrived. After some bickering, the Bones of the Flamedevil managed to recruit Li Yan as a disciple.

As of now, the only person left in the world of the sixth, seventh, and eighth stages was Meng Hao. His divine ability had not fully been created yet.

Everyone was now watching closely, including the Three Great Daoist Societies in the palace up in the starry sky.

The anticipation in the air continued to grow more intense.

"If he can outdo everyone else, then he'll take first place! Let's see how many stone steles his divine ability will cause to descend!"

"He gained enlightenment from 99 Immortal ruins. If he gets anything less than fifteen stone steles, it would be completely disappointing!"

"It's hard to say. I heard that one year, somebody gained enlightenment from 98 Immortal ruins, but in the end only created a nine-stele divine ability!"

Three days later, as Meng Hao sat there cross-legged, his eyes suddenly opened.

"Each time I gained enlightenment from the first 98 Immortal ruins," he thought, "I saw images of spirit stones and promissory notes. In the future, I hope to make all the Chosen in the great Nine Mountains and Seas write me promissory notes!"

"That is my grand aspiration....

"Writing me a promissory note is also sowing Karma, and those Karma threads can be used to interfere with fate. However, most people aren't willing to write promissory notes. Therefore... I will create a divine ability

that forms ties of destiny with them by force!" Meng Hao's eyes glittered and he raised his right index finger.

Immediately, the world began to tremble as countless threads appeared. Some of the threads were bright, and some were dark, but all were Karma Threads, and they did not originate from this world, but from Meng Hao!

Shockingly, just a movement of his finger had caused all of his Karma Threads to become visible. The entire world began to shake even more violently, and roaring filled the air, as if the entire place were about to collapse.

Meng Hao looked up and gazed at the Karma Threads, and his eyes glittered brightly. He suddenly formed his right hand into a claw, which reached out and grabbed one of the Karma Threads. The instant he touched it, he suddenly saw an image of Fan Dong'er.

He yanked on the Thread, and it twisted. At the same time, Meng Hao pulled out a piece of paper. Then, he unhesitatingly caused the Karma Thread to twist into the shape of a magical symbol, which he then imprinted onto the piece of paper.

As soon as the mark appeared, Fan Dong'er, who sat cross-legged in meditation in the Ninth Sea God World trying to suppress the female corpse on her back, felt a tremor run through her. Her eyes opened wide and then shone with astonishment.

Next, her face flickered, and she coughed up a mouthful of blood. A look of astonishment covered her face.

"What just happened? Did somebody just use the Dao of Karma to plot against me?"

In the instant that Fan Dong'er's face flickered, Meng Hao's expression became one of excitement. He took a deep breath, and then a strange light appeared in his eyes. This magic which forced ties of destiny was only in the first level of development. In the second level, he would be able to fuse promissory notes into the Karma Threads, and then unleash the full divine ability.

As far as the third level went, he would be able to use the promissory notes as Karma seeds, which, if successfully planted and the magic was allowed to grow to its full extent, would give Meng Hao the power to determine life or death with a mere thought.

"This is my divine ability. A Bit of Karma. It might not be complete, but in the future, as my cultivation base grows more abstruse, I WILL perfect it!" As Meng Hao's words rang out, the world around him shook, then filled with fissures. Everything trembled as Meng Hao came into clear view of everyone on the outside world.

The Patriarchs up in the palace were shocked.

"It's a Daoist magic!!"

"It's the Ji Clan's Dao of Karma! Wait, no! It's something different than the Ji Clan's Dao of Karma! The Ji Clan severs Karma, but this forcefully ties destiny together. It's equally domineering, equally shocking!"

"That's not just a Daoist magic, that counts as a secret magic!! Fang Mu's intuition is incredibly high!"

"I'm curious to know what enlightenment led him to create such a Daoist secret magic like this!!"

Daoist magics were rare, but secret magics were even rarer!

The spectators out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were looking on with wide eyes. Gasps could be heard, and unprecedented looks of astonishment could be seen.

"This defies belief!!"

"This Fang Mu created a magic that seems to be both a Daoist magic and a secret magic! I'm afraid only the powerful experts from the great sects would be able to understand it!"

"In any case, it caused the world to begin to collapse. Now, I wonder how many stone steles will descend!? Will he exceed Li Yan?!"

As the world trembled around Meng Hao, intense rumbling sounds could be heard as the stone steles began to fall.

One, three, five, seven....

People looked on, astonished, as a total of twenty-one stone steles descended. They Circulated around Meng Hao endlessly, creating a completely astonishing spectacle.

Instantly, the crowds in the Ninth Mountain and Sea began to seethe with excitement.

"Twenty-one stone steles! Heavens! That... that exceeds Sir Fan!!"

"Inhuman! This guy's battle prowess is monstrous, and his creativity is inhuman! Even though we couldn't see his latent talent, it's surely extraordinary! He'll definitely take first place in this trial by fire!!"

"I bet all of the Three Great Daoist Societies are in shock!! Twenty-one stone steles! This Fang Mu is definitely going to be famous in the Ninth Mountain and Sea!"

In the starry sky palace, the Patriarchs from the Three Great Daoist Societies were all sitting there as before. However, everyone else had already leapt to their feet. Their eyes shone with incredible brightness. If by any chance the Three Great Daoist Societies did not want to recruit Meng Hao, then they were ready to fight over him.

All of the disciples that had been recruited before Meng Hao could still be considered Chosen. However, sometimes people or events can come along that are simply beyond compare. Attempting to compare them with others would be unfair.

In the vast Eastern Lands, Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li looked at each other and smiled. Meng Li's face was covered with a proud smile as she looked back at Meng Hao on the vortex screen, and her heart filled with love.

"Little bastard!" muttered Patriarch Reliance. "It's good that in the end, you didn't lose me any face!"

Pill Demon and Chu Yuyan both let out light sighs. Chu Yuyan didn't understand much about Meng Hao and his proclivity toward promissory notes, but Pill Demon knew something of it, and a strange expression

could be seen on his face. As for the rest of the crowds, most of them didn't understand Karma very well, but they could speculate as to the general idea.

"With a magic like this, who will ever dare to refuse to write me a promissory note!" Meng Hao was inwardly delighted, and completely satisfied with the divine ability he had created.

At this point, everyone assumed that the Three Great Daoist Societies would swoop in to recruit Meng Hao. The Ninth Sea God World and the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto were definitely moved, and they were just getting ready to enter discussions with the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite, when all of a sudden, Meng Hao suddenly closed his eyes again. Apparently... he was sinking back into contemplation!

This scene instantly caused everyone to stare in shock.

"What is he doing?"

"Could it be... could it be that he intends to create another divine ability?" Even as shock rolled through everyone, a bright light suddenly began to shine around Meng Hao, and the music of a great Dao began to echo out.

Meng Hao truly was in the midst of contemplating enlightenment. The reason he didn't immediately absorb the power of the twenty-one stone steles was that, considering his current state, he was now ready to use his understanding of the nine bridges to create another divine ability.

"He's actually going to create another divine ability!!"

"How... how is that possible? He already created one divine ability, how can he create another one? Does he think that creating divine abilities is as simple as eating or drinking?"

All the spectators in the outside world were completely shocked, even Meng Hao's father and mother. The Patriarchs in the starry sky palace were also staring with wide eyes.

Li Yan, as well as all the other competitors who were now waiting outside, stared at Meng Hao in a daze.

This was especially the case when, only a few hours later, a massive rumbling sound surrounded Meng Hao, and an intense energy surged up from him. Because the previous world had already collapsed, the energy affected the altar Meng Hao sat on, which everyone could see. There was no need for them to experience the divine ability; everyone was able to sense that this incoming divine ability was incredibly shocking.

“He’s actually creating another divine ability! What kind of jinx is this guy?!?!” The crowds were in an uproar, and before they even had a chance to calm down, Meng Hao suddenly frowned.

“No,” he murmured, “my line of thinking was a bit off.” He waved his hand, causing the surging energy that had shocked everyone to suddenly be extinguished. Once again, he began to contemplate.

When everyone saw that happen, they were left completely speechless.... The other competitors in the trial by fire began to smile bitterly. The divine ability that Meng Hao felt to be off, was actually far more powerful than any of the divine abilities they had created. Each and every one was left completely without words.

After a few more hours, energy once again began to surge up from Meng Hao. But then....

“Off again!” he said angrily. He once again quashed the energy and started over.

The crowds were now looking at each other, dumbfounded. They began to smile wryly as they looked over at Meng Hao on the vortex screen.

As for the Patriarchs in the starry sky palace, their eyes were shining brightly, and it looked like they were getting ready for a struggle. An inhuman cultivator like this was someone each and every one did not wish to allow the Three Great Daoist Societies to recruit as a disciple.

The Patriarchs from the Three Great Daoist Societies were gaping in astonishment. Then, they exchanged glances, and within each others’ glittering eyes, they could all see anticipation and something hidden deep within.... Hope!

# Chapter 856: Paragon Bridge

This was a hope that they had held throughout all the numerous times they had hosted this trial by fire in the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

It was actually a far more important reason than disciple recruitment!

The three elders were panting slightly, but considering their high cultivation bases and levels of concentration, it didn't matter how many years they had watched the recruitment event with such hope; they wouldn't allow others to pick up any clues by looking at their facial expressions.

However... a virtually imperceptible flicker of astonishment could be seen in the eyes of the old man from the Kunlun Society, who seemed to have picked up on a few of the oddities about the situation.

Time passed by slowly. Several hours later, rumbling once again surrounded Meng Hao, quickly vanished... and then returned with even more intensity than before.

This indicated that the divine ability Meng Hao was creating was growing in power!

The audience in the Ninth Mountain and Sea stared fixedly at the vortex screens, and the cross-legged Meng Hao. They waited in keen anticipation to find out what miraculous divine ability he would create.

"That Daoist magic from before caused twenty-one stone steles to descend. Then he started making another divine ability. If he succeeds... I wonder how many stone steles will appear?!"

"This is unheard-of! The ancient records don't contain information about the first time the Three Great Daoist Societies held this trial by fire, but from the time records were kept until now, nobody has shaken the stars like this shocking Fang Mu!"

"A Chosen like that would be the focus of all attention no matter which sect he joined. It's just strange that before today, I've never heard of him before!"

The buzz of conversation echoed out everywhere, both in the outside world, and among the trial by fire competitors on the Ancient Road. Everyone was shaken by Meng Hao.

They were all waiting... for Meng Hao's miraculous creation!

The next day, more shocking rumbling could be heard. The following day, the sound of it filled the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking. Three days later... it once again began anew. Even the people on the Ancient Roads of the Nascent Soul and Spirit Severing could hear it.

It had filled the entire Ancient Road!

More people were astonished than ever!

Four days later, the intense roaring that echoed out from Meng Hao left the Ancient Road via the vortexes, passing out into the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

When that happened, Meng Hao finally opened his eyes.

In that instant, boundless, radiant light poured out from his pupils, such that anyone who faced him would feel blinded by the piercing light. Meng Hao's expression was calm as he raised his hands into the air. There in his mind was the image of the first bridge, indelibly imprinted there, never to disperse for all eternity.

As he raised his hands into the air, the world around him began to tremble, and countless rifts appeared. The air swirled, and began to scatter in layers. In just a few breaths of time, all of the land around him was shattered and began to break down. Wind screamed, and the air collapsed.

As for Meng Hao, he remained cross-legged, but as everything around him dissipated, it seemed as if he was floating in the middle of nothing, surrounded by twenty-one stone steles, each one three hundred meters tall.

It was at this point that, all of a sudden, a rumbling sound could be heard coming from the boundless void up above. It was like an echoing roar, which was accompanied by... descending stone steles!

One, two, three... a total of nine made their way down to join the other twenty-one stone steles. Furthermore, these new steles were actually silver-colored!

Their appearance was far more magnificent than the other twenty-one steles, and far more shocking.

The Patriarchs in the starry sky palace looked on with widened eyes, and the crowds out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were immediately sent into an uproar of disbelief.

"He... he isn't even finished creating the divine ability! He's just mobilizing his energy, but the stone steles already descended!"

"Those stone steles are silver-colored! I've never even heard of such a thing!"

"This divine ability is surely Heaven-defying! If it wasn't, how come a mere surge of its energy would cause the stone steles to descend, even before it's complete!"

"Just what divine ability is this?!?!"

While the crowds engaged in heated discussion, Meng Hao sat there, his face calm, his eyes devoid of either joy or sadness. His mind seemed to be completely immersed in silent contemplation of the first bridge.

His energy continued to grow more intense. After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, the image of the bridge in his mind suddenly began to expand, growing out in the blink of an eye, until it covered his entire body.

It was as if he had become the bridge!

And at the same time, the bridge... had become him!

Even more noticeable to Meng Hao was the indescribable pain that completely filled him. It was an anguish that made it seem as if a hundred streams of qi were ripping his insides open.

Great beads of sweat rolled down his face as within his body appeared... one hundred meridians!

These one hundred meridians were Immortal meridians, which previously had not yet existed inside of him. However, now that the bridge had spread out, it forced them open. Although it would only last for a moment, and was not permanent, it actually created a mold for Meng Hao's Immortal foundation!

When you added in the ethereal Immortal meridian he already had, it was a scene that would thoroughly flabbergast anyone who could see it. However, even the three Patriarchs from the Three Great Daoist Societies would be incapable of seeing what was happening inside of him. Even if they tried to force their vision inside of him, all they would be able to see was a blinding light.

The instant the one hundred meridians were forced open inside of Meng Hao, massive rumbling could be heard as more stone steles descended from up above. Shockingly, there were nine gold-colored steles!

The sight of these nine gold-colored stone steles threw the crowds in the outside world, as well as the other competitors in the trial by fire, into complete tumult.

“Eighteen stone steles!!”

“Heavens! Nine silver steles and nine golden steles! The divine ability isn’t fully created yet, but... but there are already eighteen stone steles!”

“This guy is peerless among Chosen!!”

Meng Hao couldn’t hear the buzz of conversation from the outside world. His body was trembling, and he was filled with the sensation that this divine ability that he had created was indescribably powerful. It seemed like a magic that he was actually incapable of wielding with his current cultivation base.

It was a magic that required all one hundred meridians to be genuinely open before it could be used!

Even a weaker version would still need at least fifty meridians.

At the moment, all of his one hundred meridians had been forcibly opened, but Meng Hao knew that it was only temporary. He was

borrowing power from his own good fortune, a result of his creation of a divine ability, and it was something that wouldn't last for very long. However, to Meng Hao, it was still incredible good fortune. It opened up a path for him, so that all he had to do was take a step forward, and he would be able to proceed unhindered into true Immortality.

"Even if I can't actually use this magic for the time being, I will still see it completely created!" His eyes shone with determination as the full power of his cultivation base surged into action, causing an intense roaring to fill the air.

Gradually, the image of a bridge started to be visible behind him!

The bridge was just a vague illusion. If a perfectly clear image of the bridge could be considered a hundred percent, then this illusory image would only be ten percent!

However, even with only ten percent clarity, it was still filled with an archaic, ancient aura. It seemed to be filled with a natural law that did not conform with the Nine Mountains and Seas. That natural law was Heaven-defying, as if it could split open the vault of heaven, and place the Heavens... beneath its feet!

The energy was boundlessly domineering, as if, when it looked out, all living things would have no choice but to worship on bended knee! This was a supreme power!

Meng Hao began to tremble with increased intensity. The one hundred meridians that had been opened had been shining with boundless light moments ago, but were now beginning to grow dim, as if their light were being sucked in by the bridge.

In the blink of an eye, only thirty of the meridians remained open. At this point, a frenzied determination shone in Meng Hao's eyes. He tilted his head back and roared, and the remaining Immortal meridians inside of him went dim. In that instant, the bridge behind him suddenly became twenty percent clear!

That twenty percent caused all three Ancient Roads in the Ruins of Immortality to quake. Up above in the palace, the Patriarchs' minds were

reeling. They appeared to be completely shaken. Outside in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, there were even some cultivators who coughed up blood.

Furthermore, up above in the void appeared nine... seven-colored stone steles!

Nine silver. Nine gold. Nine seven-colored!

The entire world was dumbfounded!

“What divine ability is that?!?”

“That’s beyond a Daoist magic, and even above a secret magic! Just what magic is it?!?”

“Could it be... could it be a legendary Paragon magic?!?”

With the exception of the three Patriarchs from the Three Great Daoist Societies, everyone in the starry sky palace was on their feet, faces filled with astonishment.

“Paragon magic!! For Fang Mu to be able to create a Paragon magic while in the Spirit Realm means that his intuition is stupefying!!”

“He can’t actually use the magic right now, but in the future, when his cultivation base rises into the peak of the Immortal Realm, he’ll be able to use this magic to slay experts of the Ancient Realm!”

The Patriarchs were now in an uproar. The spectators out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were completely astonished, and were staring with wide eyes and open mouths. They didn’t know what Paragon magic was, but when the bridge appeared behind Meng Hao, they could sense their cultivation bases trembling!

Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao’s mouth, and he was incapable of continuing on any further. The bridge winked out, and his body returned to its normal state. However, he felt completely exhausted, almost as if he were ill, and his face was ashen. But his eyes shone with unprecedented brightness.

“When that bridge appears, it is supreme and unparalleled. In that case,

its name shall be...

"The Paragon Bridge!!

"This is my second divine ability!"

Meng Hao slowly rose to his feet, under the eyes of the countless people watching in various locations.

Meng Hao took a deep breath, then closed his eyes and sent his divine sense out to the forty-eight stone steles.

He suddenly inhaled, and the stone steles trembled and began to emit Immortal qi. It transformed into a gentle power that rushed toward Meng Hao, surrounding him like a vortex. As he absorbed it into his body, his Immortal meridian almost seemed to come alive as it voraciously consumed the qi.

Thirty percent, forty percent, fifty percent, sixty percent, seventy percent!!

Before coming to the Ruins of Immortality, Meng Hao's Immortal meridian had only been illusory. But now, it was consuming Immortal qi with shocking speed. The stone steles began to vanish, and by the time the last one was gone, the Immortal meridian inside of him was fully eighty percent solidified!

This was an Immortal Ancient Dao meridian, formed by the ancient bronze lamp. It was an Immortal meridian that exceeded that which any modern cultivator could have, and came from ancient times. According to Shui Dongliu, it had even changed Meng Hao's destiny!

Now, it was eighty percent complete, and radiated Immortal might. Now, Meng Hao's cultivation base exploded with intense energy, that of a true Immortal!

With an Immortal meridian that was eighty percent complete, he now seemed to be undergoing huge transformations. Although he clearly was not a true Immortal yet, he was actually... even more powerful than Pill Demon when he had become a true immortal!!

# Chapter 857: Warrior Pavilion!

The crowds outside in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were staring with wide eyes and slack jaws. Their minds were completely and utterly blank.

“He gained enlightenment from 99 Immortal ruins, created two grand divine abilities, and caused a total of forty-eight stone steles to descend....”

“Never before has something like this happened, and perhaps it never will again....”

“Which Daoist Society... will he choose to join?!”

As the discussions raged, Meng Hao stood there, filling everyone with unprecedented shock.

That was especially true of the Chosen of the various sects. By now, the name Fang Mu was deeply rooted in their hearts, and to them, he was clearly the most powerful opponent they would ever face.

“His energy... is that of a true Immortal!” The Patriarchs up in the starry sky palace were all panting, and their eyes shone with light.

“Earlier he was clearly not a true Immortal. Could it be that after creating that shocking Paragon magic, he actually became a true Immortal?!”

“There was a legend in ancient times that creating Paragon magic would transform the cultivation base. It seems that legend is accurate!”

“No, he’s still not a true Immortal. He has the energy of a true Immortal, but lacks the Immortal root!”

As the other Patriarchs discussed the matter, the hope in the eyes of the three old men from the Three Great Daoist Societies grew even more intense. They did not speak, but they were all looking at Meng Hao. More specifically, they were looking at the area surrounding Meng Hao.

It was at this point that the old man from the Kunlun Society suddenly said, “This Fang Mu has already created a Paragon magic. Logically speaking, he should now appear on the altar on the Ancient Road.”

As soon as the words left his mouth, the old men from the Three Great Daoist Societies narrowed their eyes.

By now, the forty-eight stone steles around Meng Hao had vanished completely. It was then that, all of a sudden, an ancient pavilion suddenly materialized directly in front of Meng Hao.

It was richly ornamented, and brimming with Immortal will. This was no ruin; it floated up above in the air, surrounded by green stone slabs and exotic plants. Its marvelous appearance made it seem like the only thing in existence.

Immortal qi swirled around it, letting off an ancient will, and a feeling of holiness. It was as if this place had at one time been a Holy Land.

The pavilion was decorated with carved black jade, and emanated intense pressure. It was the same feeling Meng Hao had gotten when looking at the nine bridges. In front of the pavilion was an enormous boulder, upon which two characters were written in calligraphy as flamboyant as flying dragons and dancing phoenixes.

### Warrior Pavilion!

The two characters were blood red, and shone with intense light. When Meng Hao read them, he could hear roars that truly sounded like they came from real dragons and phoenixes.

As for the crowds outside in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, they couldn't see what was happening clearly, because the vortex screen depicting Meng Hao had suddenly gone blurry.

People began to cry out in shock.

"What just happened?"

"All of a sudden, we can't see the screen!!"

Back in the starry sky palace, the Patriarchs from the Three Great Daoist Societies slowly rose to their feet. The other Patriarchs were staring in shock; they couldn't see the images on the screen either. Apparently, the Immortal pavilion blocked the view of anyone on the outside.

The Patriarchs from the Three Great Daoist Societies had very serious looks on their faces as they looked at each other and then transmitted three sentences amongst themselves.

“He actually found it! Activate the spell formation and unleash the Heavenly communication magic!”

“I never imagined that, after all these tens of thousands of years of trials by fire, this day would finally arrive!”

“Throughout the years, our Three Great Daoist Societies have tried every means possible, but have been unable to even lay eyes on it, let alone acquire the legendary item within. According to our previous calculations, only people in the Spirit Realm can actually find the Immortal pavilion!”

Although no one could hear the three Patriarchs’ words, the old man from the Kunlun Society narrowed his eyes. After a moment of contemplation, his face suddenly lit up.

“So, it turns out that the Three Great Daoist Societies have repeatedly held this trial by fire throughout the ages, not just to recruit disciples, but for another purpose!”

Other Patriarchs apparently recalled something in particular and, from their expressions, seemed shaken. Despite their cultivation bases and abilities of concentration, they were still panting and trembling.

“Fellow Daoists from the Three Great Daoist Societies, this matter....”

The person who responded was the old man from the Ninth Sea God World.

“This is a private affair of our Three Great Daoist Societies,” he said, his eyes shining with a strange light. “It has nothing to do with you, Ladies and Gentlemen. In a moment, the trial by fire will continue!”

Meanwhile, Meng Hao was looking at the Immortal pavilion. It had appeared in front of him quite suddenly, apparently in response to his creation of the Paragon magic.

“Ling Yunzi said that there were 99 Immortal ruins as well as an intact

Immortal pavilion. Could it be that this pavilion is... the very one I was looking for before, but couldn't find?" His eyes went wide.

After a moment of thought, he was about to step forward when, quite abruptly, an ancient voice was transmitted into his mind.

"Fang Mu, I am Ling Yunzi of the Ninth Sea God World. I represent all of the Three Great Daoist Societies to pass a message to you. Use whatever means necessary to enter the Immortal pavilion and bring out a Feng Shui compass that rests inside. If you do, the Three Great Daoist Societies are willing to give you any reward you wish. As long as it is within our power to accomplish, we will do it!"

Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and he didn't respond. However, he did stop in place, and a look of hesitation appeared on his face.

"There is no need to worry about any danger," Ling Yunzi continued. "The Immortal pagoda appeared because of your good fortune, and I am personally unable to appear there at all; if I were to appear there, it would cause the pavilion to immediately vanish. As for you, there will be no danger to you when you go inside."

Meng Hao hesitated for another moment before a gleam of determination appeared, and he hurried forward toward the Immortal pavilion.

No one in the outside world could see what was happening on the screens. However, the Patriarchs from the Three Great Daoist Societies were panting, and their eyes shone with a strange gleam.

They could not enter the world Meng Hao was in either, and could only remain on the outside. They had waited for many years for this particular opportunity.

As Meng Hao neared the Immortal pavilion, the pressure grew more and more intense. However, for some strange reason, while the pressure would have prevented any other person from getting close, it actually dissipated for Meng Hao, making a sort of personal path for him to walk.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered. He sensed no danger, so he slowly walked up

to the Immortal pavilion and stood in front of it. Then he took a deep breath as he lifted his hand and pushed on the front door.

Absolutely no sound could be heard as the door opened. However, the instant it did, boundless light shone out from inside, blinding light that completely enveloped Meng Hao and then spread out in all directions outside of the pavilion. After a moment, Ling Yunzi let out a miserable shriek. As it turned out, he had actually been following Meng Hao in an attempt to personally enter the Immortal pavilion.

However, the light instantly forced him back. Blood oozed out of his eyes, ears, nose and mouth, almost as if he had been cursed. Filled with fear and shock, he immediately shot backward and then left the world, lest he be killed.

Now, Meng Hao was the only person in the vicinity of the Immortal pavilion. He stood there in the light, completely unharmed, until the glow slowly faded away. He looked blankly at the pavilion in front of him, then took a deep breath.

“What is this place...?” he murmured. Inside of the Immortal pavilion, he could now see numerous shelves, which, shockingly, were completely filled with all sorts of magical items.

There was a whip that was surrounded by a dragon-like mist of swirling smoke. It appeared to have been constructed from sinew and tendons, and it emanated a shocking pressure, as if it had been refined from a true dragon. There was an ancient mirror, covered with cloudy mist. From the look of it, there was some living being sealed inside of it.

There was a crimson eye that, although shut, gave Meng Hao a shocking feeling when he looked at it.

There was a cauldron that rested atop a toad, which it seemed the cauldron was suppressing.

Further away was a long, green spear, with a spearhead carved from bone. When Meng Hao looked more closely at the wood that made up the shaft, his mind reeled. He recognized that wood! It was from... the World Tree! 1

There was a broadsword, stained with black, wet blood. That blood seemed to still contain a consciousness and was emitting shocking howls.

In addition to those items, there was also a Feng Shui compass. For the most part, it was ordinary in appearance. However, a white crystal was inset into the very middle of the compass. The crystal emanated a gentle glow that caused the entire Feng Shui compass to appear extraordinary.

From the look of it, the white crystal could be removed from the center of the compass, as if the compass had merely been created to allow the crystal to emanate its power.

There were many magical items of all sorts, the use of many of which Meng Hao was unable to determine. The whip was one of the more bizarre items, but actually any of them would cause a huge stir if they showed up in the outside world.

In addition to all the magical items, there was also a desk in the Immortal pavilion, upon which were some bamboo slips, as well as various other writing utensils.

Meng Hao took a deep breath, and his eyes shone with brilliant light as he took a step forward, entering the Immortal pavilion. As soon as he stepped foot inside, the door shut behind him.

Simultaneously, an ice-cold voice suddenly echoed out.

"In compliance with the last will and testament of the Three Great Paragons, anyone with a Spirit Realm cultivation base who creates Paragon magic may enter the Warrior Pavilion and select a treasure."

Meng Hao looked around, but couldn't see anyone except for himself in the Immortal pavilion. The voice that had just spoken was cold and detached, seemingly emotionless. After it spoke that single sentence, it said nothing further.

Meng Hao hesitated for a moment, then began to look around at the various precious treasures, his heart thumping eagerly.

He actually wished he could take all of the magical items in sight, but after gazing about for a bit, his eyes came to rest on the Feng Shui

compass.

"That must be the Feng Shui compass the Three Great Daoist Societies want me to get for them," he thought, his eyes flickering. After looking at the Feng Shui compass for a moment, he began to mutter to himself.

"The Three Great Daoist Societies' trial by fire has an additional purpose, which is to get someone to come in here and retrieve this item for them. If I don't comply with their wishes, I fear my future will be fraught with grim possibilities after I leave this place." He wasn't quite willing to go along with their request, but after a moment of consideration, he looked at the Feng Shui compass with glittering eyes. Then he stepped forward and picked it up.

In the moment he lifted up the Feng Shui compass, he also retrieved a flying sword from his bag of holding and vigorously went to work trying to pry the white crystal out.

"You people think you can profit at my expense!? Never!" Gritting his teeth, he shoved down on the sword until a popping sound rang out and the crystal flew out from its spot in the center of the Feng Shui compass. Meng Hao grabbed it, then smiled as he carefully put it away in his bag of holding.

Then he looked over the Feng Shui compass again. It actually looked perfect. After ensuring that there were no scratches on it, he cleared his throat and looked around at all the magical items.

"Although that voice said I could only take one treasure, it didn't say anything about repercussions for taking another. I might as well try." His heart began to beat even faster as he walked over to the spear. He reached his hand out, but almost as soon as his hand was about to grab it, a powerful force of expulsion pushed back at him.

The cold voice once again rang out inside the Immortal pavilion.

"This item is not connected to you by destiny. You have already taken a treasure. You may leave now."

"Not connected by destiny?" thought Meng Hao. "Destiny is like the

cause and effect of Karma. So does that mean that I have no Karma connecting me to these magical items?" A strange light gleamed in his eyes, and he suddenly cleared his throat. It was at this moment that the Seventh Demon Sealing Hex, the magic of Karmic Hexing, was suddenly unleashed.

\*

1. Here's a brief recap of the World Tree. It was first described (apocryphally) in [chapter 109](#), when Meng Hao bought the Spring and Autumn Tree at auction. It was also mentioned in [chapter 158](#) when Meng Hao had a vision about the origin of the Lightning Cauldron. In the Song Clan search for a son-in-law, the competitors entered a painting that depicted the World Tree, which was also when Meng Hao met Shui Dongliu. That arc started in [chapter 194](#), and the World Tree is mentioned there as well as in subsequent chapters, all the way until [chapter 199](#). In [chapter 208](#), Shui Dongliu mentioned the World Tree when he speaks to Meng Hao. In [chapter 392](#), Meng Hao made up a story about the World Tree to impress the people of the Crow Divinity tribes. In [chapter 821](#), Li Ling'er used a magical technique that summoned an illusory World Tree.

# Chapter 858: The Last Time!

The Seventh Demon Sealing Hex was a magic unique to the League of Demon Sealers. It seemed similar to the Ji Clan's Dao of Karma, but was fundamentally different. As he unleashed the magic, Meng Hao's eyes gleamed with a strange light, and he looked around at all the magical items.

Instantly, he was able to see numerous threads attached to the various magical items. These were none other than Karma Threads.

All of the magical items had Karma Threads attaching them to the Warrior Pavilion, and now Meng Hao could see each and every one of them clearly.

"So, even magical items can have Karma on them," he thought. "Well, now I'm not so worried." Clearing his throat, he glanced around craftily.

"First, I'll hex the Karma on these magical items, and then I'll form a destiny connection with them!" Waving his hand, he caused the Seventh Demon Sealing Hex to cover all of the magical items in the Warrior Pavilion.

In the blink of an eye, bright light shot out in all directions, and the entire Warrior Pavilion began to shake.

Meng Hao's heart pounded as he waited for a few moments. Seeing that there was no further reaction, he relaxed a bit, then looked around craftily one more time.

"The floor tiles here are excellent," he thought, licking his lips. "Later on, I think I'll pry up a few to take with me. And the wood those shelves are made from is anything but ordinary....

"Those decorative tiles are nice too!" His eyes shone brightly as he took a deep breath.

He quickly performed an incantation gesture, causing Karma Threads to appear on top of his head. These were his own personal Karma Threads, which glittered with resplendent colors. Meng Hao settled his qi and

calmed his mind, then searched through his Karma Threads until he found one that seemed to be on the verge of fading away.

That Karma Thread was the one that had been created when he first laid eyes on the spear moments ago. Of course, the thread was incredibly thin, as if even a slight breeze would cause it to scatter.

Meng Hao took a deep breath, then lifted his hand and pointed out toward that particular thread. Instantly, the Karma Thread twisted into the shape of a magical symbol, which then descended into Meng Hao's hand.

"Bind destiny!" he said. Instantly, the thread began to glitter with radiant light. At the same time, the spear began to tremble, as if it were struggling against something.

As it fought, the Karma thread attached to Meng Hao's head that represented the spear suddenly grew very clear. Now it seemed to be even more closely attached to Meng Hao, as if the Karma between the two of them was growing deeper.

"A Bit of Karma! Bind destiny!" Meng Hao's eyes shone with bright light, and he let out a bellow. The magical symbol on his right hand began to glitter radiantly as he crushed it. A boom rattled out as the magical symbol shattered. In the moment that it dispersed, the spear ceased struggling, and Meng Hao could suddenly feel something like a summons, echoing out from the spear.

Unable to withhold his excitement, he stretched his hand out into the air. The spear immediately flew through the air with a screaming whistling sound and landed directly in his hand

Meng Hao laughed out loud.

"Mine! All of the magical items here are mine now!" Even as excitement filled his heart, suddenly, a murderous aura surged toward him from behind.

The aura was so intense that it seemed capable of destroying him in body and spirit by merely brushing against him.

Meng Hao's face fell, and he jerked his head around. However, there was

nobody behind him. The murderous aura was still there, though; apparently it came from the Warrior Pavilion itself.

Cold sweat dripped down Meng Hao's face, and he didn't dare to move. The murderous aura filled him with intense nervousness, and he began to edge his way toward the door. The murderous aura followed him as he went, as if it were attempting to intimidate him.

"I was just creating some ties of destiny!" Meng Hao said quickly. "What are you flipping out for?" After a moment, he continued, "Uhh... a misunderstanding, a misunderstanding. Warrior Pavilion, my brother, this was all just a misunderstanding, alright?" The murderous aura seemed as intense as ever.

After a long moment, though, Meng Hao sensed that the aura was dissipating. Seeing that it hadn't attacked him, his eyes darted around. He had half a mind to leave, but when he saw all the magical items around him in the Warrior Pavilion, he just couldn't make himself do it.

"Warrior Pavilion, my brother, don't pay any attention to me!" he called out loudly. "I'm fine here by myself. You get back to whatever it was you were doing, alright?" With that, he carefully sidled over to the sword covered with black blood.

Ever-vigilant of the murderous aura, he quickly used A Bit of Karma to find the Karma Thread that connected him to the sword, then bound the destiny as quickly as possible.

The sword trembled, and the murderous aura from the Warrior Pavilion exploded out. Cold beads of sweat broke out on Meng Hao's forehead, but he gritted his teeth and used Ties of Destiny a few more times. After the third time, the sword stopped struggling, and an invisible connection formed between the two of them.

The sword flew out and began to swirl around Meng Hao like a dragon.

Meng Hao had no time to rejoice as the Warrior Pavilion's murderous aura exploded in intensity throughout the entire pavilion. It seemed to be incensed, and matchlessly fierce.

“That was the last time!” said Meng Hao. “The last time!”

He then licked his lips and stood in place, not daring to move for a long moment, after which he cautiously inched over toward a magical jade flower. Gritting his teeth, he immediately slammed A Bit of Karma into the magical flower. A magical symbol appeared; this flower was apparently different from the other magical items, and he succeeded on his first try.

Almost immediately, the shocking murderous aura caused everything to tremble violently. Meng Hao’s entire body was now soaked with sweat.

“That was the last time!” he cried out urgently. “I promise, that was really the last time!

“Warrior Pavilion, my brother, it was really the last time. I’m taking off now, see you!” The intensity of the murderous aura caused Meng Hao’s face to grow pale, and his heart to tremble. Even as he spoke, he quickly began to walk toward the exit.

However, after only a few steps, he couldn’t help but use Ties of Destiny on a little bottle he saw on a nearby shelf. It was blackish-green, and although it seemed unremarkable, Meng Hao could sense a boundless aura emanating off of it.

“Dammit!” he thought, gnashing his teeth. At the same time, he found the Karma Thread connecting him to the bottle and used it to make a magical symbol. As soon as the symbol landed in his hand, he crushed it and, without taking the time to check whether or not he had succeeded, quickly grabbed the little bottle.

As soon as his hand wrapped around it, his body flashed toward the Warrior Pavilion’s exit. At the same time, the murderous aura exploded toward Meng Hao at an incredible speed, and a faint roar of rage could be heard echoing about.

“The last one!” he cried. “That was really, really the last one. I’m going now, I’m going now!” Meng Hao’s scalp was numb as he shot forward. Behind him, the murderous aura swept toward him as if to drive him out.

Next to the door was the table he had seen earlier. As he passed, he couldn't stop himself from reaching out to grab a jade slip he saw sitting there.

That seemed to push the murderous aura of the Warrior Pavilion past the limits of its patience. It transformed into an explosive attack that shot toward Meng Hao.

A faint howl could be heard from within the murderous aura: "Get the hell out of here!"

When it smashed into Meng Hao, blood sprayed from his mouth, and he was flung toward the door like a kite with its string cut.

The door slammed open, and Meng Hao was thrown out, whereupon the door slammed shut again.

Almost immediately, the Warrior Pavilion began to fade away. At the same time, the scene was now clearly visible to the Patriarchs of the Three Great Daoist Societies up in the starry sky palace, as well as the Patriarchs from the other sects.

On the screen, they saw Meng Hao flying out, blood spraying from his mouth, his expression one of incredible determination. From the look of it, he had been willing to look death calmly in the face in order to complete the task assigned to him, and had been willing to pay any cost.

Meng Hao coughed up another mouthful of blood and then cried out, "Fang Mu of the junior generation, despite facing great personal injury and near death, went through hell and high water to accomplish the mission given to him by the mighty Three Great Daoist Societies!" With that, he produced the Feng Shui compass and held it aloft.

It was a very moving image. Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth, and his face was pale white. His body trembled, and he was clearly very seriously injured. His words, and the image he presented, instantly moved the three Patriarchs from the Three Great Daoist Societies.

The three Patriarchs were panting, and were completely incapable of controlling the wild exuberance they felt in their hearts.

It was at this exact moment that the pale-faced Ling Yunzi suddenly materialized in front of Meng Hao. He immediately made a grasping gesture with his right hand, and the Feng Shui compass in Meng Hao's hand flew over to him. He nodded to Meng Hao, and then sighed inwardly with emotion. He himself had just been injured by the light from the Warrior Pavilion, and knew how dangerous it could be. When he saw the injuries Meng Hao had received, he was filled with sympathy. Then he noticed Meng Hao's solemn and stirring facial expression, and he suddenly had the feeling the things that had previously occurred between the two of them must have been misunderstandings.

"What a good kid!" he said. "Here, take this medicinal pill. It'll take care of those injuries!" Moved, he waved his right hand, causing a white medicinal pill to fly out and hover in front of Meng Hao. Because of his skill in the Dao of alchemy, Meng Hao could tell from the medicinal aroma of the pill that it was definitely a treasured pill.

"It's too bad I can't duplicate it right here and now," Meng Hao thought. He quickly accepted the pill and then put it into his bag of holding.

"I think you should eat it now," said Ling Yunzi, looking concerned. "Those injuries are quite serious."

Inwardly, Meng Hao chuckled bitterly. He had no desire whatsoever to consume the medicinal pill. All he needed to do was activate his Eternal stratum, and he would recover almost immediately. However, Ling Yunzi's gaze was staring right at him, so Meng Hao endured the pain of his loss, clenched his teeth, and finally consumed the pill.

As soon as the medicinal pill dissolved into him, a warm current filled his body, and all of his injuries were healed.

"What a loss," he thought. "What a terrible loss. If I could have duplicated that medicinal pill, I could have sold it later for an exorbitant price." Inwardly, he was laughing bitterly, but on the outside he put on an expression of appreciation as he clasped hands and bowed toward Ling Yunzi.

Ling Yunzi nodded again. The more he thought about it, the more he felt

that Meng Hao was among the best of the best, both in terms of cultivation base and intuition, not to mention fate.

"I really misunderstood him in the matter of the latent talent and those other stages," Ling Yunzi thought.

Smiling broadly, he then said, "Fang Mu, are you willing to become a Conclave disciple of the Ninth Sea God World?!"

In response to the words, the Patriarchs in the starry sky palace all looked on with glittering eyes.

The Patriarch from the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite smiled faintly, a smile that contained abstruse meaning. The Patriarch from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto hesitated for a moment. As for the Patriarch from the Ninth Sea God World, he laughed out loud.

Meng Hao gaped for a moment, and was thinking about refusing. Then he thought about how funny it would be if he joined the Ninth Sea God World under his assumed name Fang Mu, considering that Fan Dong'er was also a member.

He cleared his throat and clasped hands.

"Junior is willing," he replied. "Unfortunately, I have a few random matters that I have to take care of. If senior is willing to give me a bit of time to handle those affairs, then when I'm finished, I will immediately go to the Ninth Sea God World."

# Chapter 859: The Final Two Stages

"Of course, if that is your wish," Ling Yunzi said with a smile. "Why don't you think about it a bit. Once you get to the Ninth Sea God World, you can give me your final answer." He waved his sleeve, causing a command medallion to fly out to Meng Hao.

"When you've taken care of your affairs, crush that medallion. It will bring you to the Ninth Sea God World." With that, Ling Yunzi turned and vanished. At the same time, the air around Meng Hao shattered. When things grew clear again, he was back on the altar on the Ancient Road.

All of the other competitors in the trial by fire were looking at Meng Hao with expressions of disbelief.

As for everyone in the outside world, although they weren't sure about the details of what had gone on between Meng Hao and the Three Great Daoist Societies, that didn't mean they were any less amazed regarding Meng Hao's rise to prominence in the trial by fire.

This was especially the case due to Ling Yunzi's recruitment of Meng Hao as a Conclave disciple.

When the spectators in the Ninth Mountain and Sea heard that, their gazes became torn between envy and admiration. All of them were staring at Meng Hao on the screen.

"He's pretty much the number one figure in the entire trial by fire. It's no surprise that he ended up joining the Ninth Sea God World."

"I wonder if he'll participate in the final two stages. Of course, after that is the most important part... the arena matches!"

"If I were him, I would participate in the final two stages, but not the arena matches. After all, the Chosen from the great Sects will be able to join in the fighting there. They're qualified to do so without participating in the testing, which is why they don't walk the Ancient Road. They can directly go straight to the arena matches!"

"This Fang Mu might be strong, but it's doubtful that he can measure up

to all those Chosen.”

“That’s really too bad. Throughout the successive trials by fire put on by the Three Great Daoist Societies, the arena matches are the highlight. There are incredible prizes up for grabs!”

Even as the discussions continued outside, the ninth stage was beginning on the three Ancient Roads.

The number of people still participating in the trial by fire had already been significantly reduced. People had been eliminated consistently throughout the previous eight stages. Plus there were people like Fatty and the others who had been directly recruited and escorted away by various sects, and would not be participating in the final two stages or the arena matches.

Ling Yunzi suddenly materialized on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking.

“The final two stages will assess the heart, and the Dao!” he said. He looked over at Meng Hao with an approving smile, and then swept his hands through the air. This caused everyone’s positions to change once again, and Meng Hao was yet again in the lead position.

“The ninth stage refines the heart! The tenth stage inquires of your Dao!

“After these two stages, seven thousand Nascent Soul competitors, two thousand Spirit Severing competitors, and one thousand Dao Seeking competitors, will be chosen to partake in the arena matches!

“I must remind you that there are many prizes available during the arena matches. However, your opponents will not just be fellow competitors in the trial by fire. You will also be up against Chosen from various sects, as well as disciples from the Three Great Daoist Societies.

“This might be a bit unfair, but there are many things under Heaven that are like that. The truly mighty will definitely rise above the others!” Ling Yunzi waved his hand again, and the altar once more began to grow hazy.

The crowds in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were gazing steadily at the screens as they waited for the final two stages. In the palace in the starry sky, the various Patriarchs were also looking on with pensive expressions.

None of them asked any questions of the Three Great Daoist Societies, but instead, focused on the competitors in the trial by fire who they had taken note of earlier.

The Patriarchs from the Three Great Daoist Societies sat up front, their expressions calm. They themselves were the only ones who knew how truly excited they were.

Meanwhile, many discussions were being carried on in the outside world.

"The ninth stage tests the heart, and whether or not the contestants can be victorious over the Devil in their hearts!"

"That stage has something to do with willpower, but not a lot. The key to being victorious over the Devil in one's heart is not just willpower, but most importantly the certitude of one's Dao Heart. That's why the ninth and tenth stages are conducted together."

"I wonder if Fang Mu will continue to be the center of attention in this stage. If he stays in first place like he has so far, then his glory will be completely and utterly established. After all, he's completely surpassed tens of thousands of others in each of the various stages."

"I'd say... not necessarily. He might have come in first in the previous stages, but now that the final two stages are here, he's definitely exhausted. It will be difficult for him to succeed!"

As the discussions continued, the competitors in the trial by fire on the Ancient Roads were gradually being covered over by the blurriness as they were taken to a special world. This world was completely different than the others they had been to.

Meng Hao opened his eyes to see... a purgatory!

It was a world of flames. Even the sky was on fire, and what land was visible that didn't have flames was dry and cracked, without the slightest sign of life.

Furthermore, Meng Hao quickly realized that he had been strung up, bound by an iron chain. As he looked around, he saw that there were iron

chains everywhere, all of which bound people.

Among those were Nascent Soul and Spirit Severing cultivators, as well as some Dao Seeking cultivators like Meng Hao. Meng Hao saw the young man in the mask, as well as Chen Fan with his Nascent Soul cultivation base.

“What’s... what’s going on?!” Before coming into this world that tested the heart and the Dao, he had been full of confidence. After all, he had passed through all the previous levels as the center of attention.

Now, though, as he looked around at this unique world, for some unknown reason he was suddenly filled with a stifling sense of crisis.

He was not the only one to be regaining clarity. Around him, there were roughly a hundred thousand cultivators all recovering their senses. When they realized the situation they were in, they began to cry out in alarm.

“What is this place? How could the final two stages be like this!?”

“I never thought... I never thought that we would all be tested together!”

Meng Hao’s breath came in ragged pants as he tested out the chain that bound him and found that he couldn’t make it budge an inch. Also, his ability to use his cultivation base had apparently been suppressed, leaving him with nothing but the ordinary power of Dao Seeking.

Even more shocking to Meng Hao was that he could feel the iron chain that bound him swaying back and forth. Also, when he looked off into the distance, what he saw caused him to gape. In fact, there were even some people whose eyes went wide when they saw what was off in the distance, and they let out cries of shock and alarm.

Meng Hao was able to clearly see that at the very end of the iron chains that bound all the cultivators was an enormous cudgel, which was in turn slung over the shoulder of a giant!

The giant was gargantuan, and bare chested. He wore animal hide clothing, and his skin was pitch-black, with a violet tint. He moved forward at a run, which caused the iron chains to sway back and forth, making everyone attached to them feel as if the entire world was spinning.

The crowds in the outside world of the Ninth Mountain and Sea were equally shaken. They watched the vortex screens, and the gargantuan giant which had appeared.

“So the final two stages are like this!”

“What kind of test is this?”

It was at this point that a huge rift appeared in the sky of the world that Meng Hao and the others were in, out of which flew hundreds of thousands of figures.

These figures were not cultivators, but rather, winged beasts. Their appearances were savage, and they kicked up a shocking wind as they immediately began to fly toward the cultivators.

It was at this point that the giant suddenly stopped running, and then swung the huge cudgel into the air, which also swung the iron chains attached to its end. All of the cultivators were buffeted by gale force winds that made it feel as if they had been slammed into a huge cliff face. The cultivators were sent flying directly into the charging flying beasts.

The beasts' eyes were bright red, and voracious grins could be seen on their faces. They immediately pounced onto the cultivators, and in the blink of an eye, miserable screams could be heard. Many people were instantly killed in the initial salvo, completely wiped out by the beasts, who swallowed them alive.

A rain of blood fell down toward the ground, causing the sea of flames down below to dim and darken.

A vicious gleam appeared in Meng Hao's eyes as his body swung with the chain, completely out of his own control. However, he was still able to attack, and he didn't hesitate to perform an incantation with his right hand. He made a claw-like gesture, and lines of claw marks appeared, which slammed into an incoming beast's head.

A boom could be heard, and the beast shrieked, after which its head exploded. However, even as its body tumbled past Meng Hao, three more beasts appeared behind it.

More booms could be heard as Meng Hao attacked like the wind. He had a vicious personality that he now made no attempt to hide. His attacks sent blood flying through the air, and the killing intent which shone in his eyes grew more and more intense. After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, more than thirty beasts had died under his attacks.

There were many other cultivators like Meng Hao, all engaged in fierce fighting. Gradually, more and more of them died. The few people that were left behind were now facing ever greater numbers of beasts.

Furthermore, some beasts had appeared that were similar to the Dao Seeking stage in power. Within an hour, false Immortal beasts were on the scene, and one cultivator after another died around Meng Hao. After two more hours passed, there were less than a hundred people, who were surrounded and quickly being overwhelmed.

Meng Hao held on for fifteen breaths of time before his body collapsed and his head was devoured by a beast. In the last moments before his death, he was able to see that he had held out long enough to be the last person to die.

Everything went black.

When things became clear again, Meng Hao found himself in a world of flames, with a dismal sky, and swaying chains. Everything he saw was exactly the same as before. Other people began to awaken, then stare around themselves in shock.

Meng Hao was also gaping, and then his scalp went numb. Apparently, nothing had changed. The giant was still running forward, and everyone who had died was back where they had been before.

After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, the rift opened up in the sky and the beasts poured down. It was all exactly the same as before, almost as if they had been reincarnated. Yet again the giant roared and flung the cudgel out. Meng Hao and all the other cultivators who were attached to the chains were once again thrust into battle.

Meng Hao quickly found that exactly the same beasts as before came to

attack him.

After two hours passed, Meng Hao died. When he opened his eyes, the chains were still there, swinging....

Once, twice, three times.... Meng Hao quickly lost track of time and how many times he had died. Soon, people around him began to grow numb to what was happening. As soon as they were tossed out, they chose to die, then begin the cycle again.

An expression of frustration gradually appeared on Meng Hao's face. There was no way to leave this place. This was supposed to be a trial by fire, but there seemed to be no chance to live.

Die, die, and die again.

Revive, revive, and revive again.

Some people began to collapse into frenzied howls. However, that made no difference. Some people silently contemplated different methods of success, but all craftiness and plots were in vain.

Meng Hao watched as a Dao Seeking cultivator used some unknown method to try to possess one of the attacking beasts, then use it to flee. Soon, he vanished, apparently having escaped.

However, the next time Meng Hao regained consciousness, the man was still strung up on the chain, just like before.

As to what exactly had happened, the man gave no explanation.

# Chapter 860: The Heart is Strong, the Dao is Unyielding!

Dying fills people with fear. Dying 100 times will make people numb. Dying 1,000 times can cause one to feel lost. Dying 10,000 times...

That can make someone feel as if they aren't even human any more.

Such an experience gave birth to pain, a pain that the competitors could only hope would just come to an end. A pain that spread into the hearts of everyone. Their hearts filled with torment to the point that their Daos were in peril of being lost.

This trial by fire was like an enormous grindstone, slowly crushing away their wills as it turned and turned.

More and more people gave up on fighting back. If fighting back 10,000 times in a row did no good, how many people were there that could persevere...?

Meng Hao persevered. Every time he woke up, he would continue to fight and kill the beasts that attacked him. 10,000 times.

As time went by, Meng Hao saw countless cultivators making various decisions. Some chose to try to flee. Some chose to attack the giant. Some chose to commit suicide.

There were even some people who attacked other cultivators.

Regardless of what they did, every time Meng Hao regained his senses, he saw the same people in the same places on the iron chains, without exception.

The audiences in the Ninth Mountain and Sea watched the screens, and their hearts and minds trembled. If you said that the spectators had been shocked by the previous eight stages, then this stage left them completely astonished.

Before, they had been envious of the competitors, and had even sighed, wishing that they could switch places. Now that they saw what was

happening in the final two stages, however, they could only watch silently.

As for how many times the cultivators had actually died, nobody knew.

“Just what kind of test is this? How does dying over and over again help their hearts and their Daos?”

“These last two stages are basically Hell!” By this point, the audience members were all breathing in ragged pants.

“You can see people trying all kinds of different methods. If you add everything together, it seems they’re trying every possibility! But in the end, there’s no other result than defeat.”

“How can this test be passed? I’m afraid Fang Mu will have no way to clinch first place.”

Complete silence reigned in the starry sky palace as the Patriarchs stared wordlessly at the display screens.

The dying continued, over and over again, an endless cycle.

Meng Hao remained silent and taciturn throughout the process. However, unlike many of the people around him, he never attempted to flee, nor did he lose his desire to fight. From beginning to end, every time he regained lucidity, he would begin killing.

However, his deaths came more and more quickly. That was because more and more of the others ceased resisting. When the iron chains were flung out, they would simply close their eyes and wait to die.

Gradually, fewer and fewer people were like Meng Hao, constantly fighting back. Of the tens of thousands of people who had started out fighting, there were now only a few thousand remaining. Suddenly, Ling Yunzi’s voice echoed out within the world.

“If you say ‘I give up,’ you can leave.”

The instant these nine words spread out, among the countless cultivators who had grown numb to the constant dying and were once again on the verge of being killed, someone quaveringly spoke up.

“I give up....” As soon as he spoke the words, he vanished, leaving the

world entirely.

After him, one voice after another began to ring out, and one cultivator after another began to vanish.

Without the presence of despair, if someone is given hope, they might not attach too much importance to it, especially if they have a steadfast heart and an unchangeable Dao.

However... if you torment someone to their limits and place them in the midst of despair, then give them a sudden scrap of hope, an opportunity to be extricated, then most people would not hesitate to grab that chance.

More and more people chose to give up. However, there were also others who had previously ceased resisting, who suddenly seemed to be filled with energy, and began to fight the beasts.

Time passed by. They died over and over again, and as they did, the words 'I give up' seemed to become like an inner Devil, lurking in the hearts of all the cultivators.

Simply speaking, all they had to do was say some words, and the constant torment would be over. They would be released.

"What a brutal test," said one of the Patriarchs in the palace.

"From ancient times until now, the mark to pass this stage has been 30,000 deaths."

"More than 50,000 marks a participant as Chosen!"

"To date, no one has exceeded 79,113. That was the mark set by Sir Fan."

"So, he participated in this part too. Without the element of despair, perhaps many could grit their teeth and continue on. But with hope right there, so close that all they have to do is reach out and grab it, how many people will be able to persevere?"

"The ninth stage tests the heart, the tenth stage inquires of the Dao. These two stages test how strong one's heart is and how unyielding one's Dao is!"

"The longer they endure, the more terrifying everything becomes!" In

addition to the Patriarchs in the palace who were discussing the matter, there were many outside in the Ninth Mountain and Sea who were able to piece together some clues about the nature of the two stages.

"I heard that when Sir Fan reached these last two stages, he died more than 79,000 times. He held on until he was the very last person before giving up."

The outside world was abuzz, but their discussions could not pass into the world in which Meng Hao was continuing to persevere. Inside of him, two voices were speaking, one of them telling him to give up, the other telling him to endure.

Every time, he would die wracked with pain, and would wake up confused. It is a simple thing to describe, but it was nothing short of torture. The number of cultivators left behind continued to shrink.

The sound of the words 'I give up' that echoed around was like the voice of that inner Devil. It actually caused even more of the remaining cultivators to eventually decide to quit.

Time passed by. Fewer and fewer cultivators remained behind. Soon there were only a few hundred. After three days, there were only a hundred. After another three days, there were only nine.

Of those nine, there were three who were enduring, but had ceased to fight back. It was a somewhat fraudulent method, and although it initially seemed as if it would lessen their torment, in the end, it actually made things even more painful.

The other six included Meng Hao. Every time he awoke, he would begin to fight.

He had no idea how many times he had died. His eyes were bloodshot, and everywhere he looked, he saw blood. Another three days passed, and the three people who had been passively allowing themselves to be killed, finally couldn't take it any more and gave up.

Of the five people other than Meng Hao who had continued to fight, four quit.

There were now only two people left. One was Meng Hao, the other was... Chen Fan!

Chen Fan fought. Every time he regained his senses, he fought viciously, almost as if he hoped to achieve some special state amidst all the carnage.

Out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, everyone was shocked. In the starry sky palace, the Patriarchs were watching with baited breath, closely observing Chen Fan.

Chen Fan had had his outstanding moments in the previous stages, but had not attracted much attention when creating his divine ability. Now, in these last two stages, he was suddenly rising to prominence.

"With such a heart and such a Dao, this young man has incredible good fortune!"

"He could give up at any time, but has endured all the way to this point! He's already died 70,000 times!!"

"He'll most likely be able to hold on for a while longer. In this stage, the most difficult point is when there is only one person left. At that point, first place is secured, which leads to a softening of the heart, making it difficult to continue on. Even Sir Fan, when he reached that point, didn't last for more than a thousand deaths before giving up."

A day later, Chen Fan began to tremble, and finally chose to quit. He had endured for more than 70,000 deaths, which was second only to Sir Fan's performance all those years ago. He was now quite the center of attention, and there were several sects who were preparing to try to recruit him.

At this point in the shocking trial by fire, everyone was looking at the final remaining participant... Meng Hao.

"He took first place in the first two stages, outshone the first place winner in the middle three stages, and then in the following three stages, took first place yet again. Now in the final two stages... he actually... took first place again!"

"He's definitely going to rise to complete prominence! Nobody can get in his way. As long as he doesn't get killed, then he's going to be thoroughly

famous in all the Ninth Mountain and Sea!"

"It's like we're looking at a future Paragon...." All of the cultivators who were watching the trial by fire out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea could now feel their minds spinning.

By now, especially after seeing the final two stages, they all had to admit that if they were in Meng Hao's place, they would not be able to do what he was doing.

Meng Hao was still hanging on. He knew that he was the only person left, and yet he didn't give up. A vicious, ruthless smile appeared on his face, and each time he regained consciousness, he would wade into battle with the countless beasts. It was in the middle of this carnage that he tempered his heart and his Dao.

"My Dao is the endless path of life, freedom and independence! Now, I am restrained by these chains, which is the furthest thing from freedom!

"My heart is unconstrained. If Heaven and Earth collapse, it will not be destroyed. If all living things become ancient, it will not wither. But now, it hesitates!

"My Dao is not free, but I desire freedom! My heart hesitates, but I wish to persist past the point of hesitation!

"This trial by fire is testing me, and I'm using it to polish my Dao. In this way, although I might seem to be restrained, in actuality they are nothing but chains. They can't tie me up, they can only polish my Dao!

"As for my heart, if I wish it to be unhesitating, then I need to endure. Endure to the point... where I do not feel pain in this trial by fire, but instead, happiness!

"When I pass this stage, then I will be truly free, and my heart will be incredibly strong!" Eyes shining brightly, he launched an attack.

73,000. 76,000. 79,000....

80,000!

When Meng Hao died for the 80,000th time, the audiences in the

outside world roared, and the patriarchs in the starry sky palace, despite being somewhat accustomed to how Meng Hao worked wonders, were still completely shaken.

"He exceeded Sir Fan!!"

"I just added it up, and that was the 80,000th death! That puts him in first place among everyone from ancient times until now!!"

"Fang Mu. Fang Mu! This name is definitely going to shock the Heavens!"

While the audience was in an uproar, Meng Hao continued to persevere. A smile could be seen on his face, and he actually seemed to be incredibly happy. It wasn't happiness because of dying, or killing, but rather, a happiness because of his own Dao. His heart was now growing even more resolute.

To his heart and his Dao, death... was unworthy of being anything more than a grindstone.

A few days later, he died for the 90,000th time!

A few more days, and it was... 100,000!

That 100,000th death caused universal uproar. When Meng Hao opened his eyes afterward, wild colors flashed in the sky, and a wind screamed. The giant slowly dropped to one knee and raised the cudgel aloft. The countless beasts that had poured out of the rift all dropped to the ground.

It was as if they were prostrating themselves in worship!

The stage had been cleared!

# Chapter 861: First Place!

“What a Chosen!” By this time, all of the Patriarchs in the starry sky palace had risen to their feet with expressions of deep emotion on their faces. They were looking at the vortex screens, where the giant and the beasts were all bowing in worship to Meng Hao.

All of the sects wanted to recruit Meng Hao as a disciple, but the Ninth Sea God World of the Three Great Daoist Societies had already made a move, leaving them with no opportunity.

It wasn’t just the other Three Great Daoist Societies who were in such a position, but also the Five Great Holy Lands.

“This Fang Mu is one of the most incredible Chosen to appear in countless years!”

“Congratulations to the Ninth Sea God World. Fang Mu will definitely demonstrate extraordinary talent and skill in the God World!” In response to such words from the various Patriarchs, the old man from the Ninth Sea God World laughed heartily. His expression was one of extreme contentment.

By now, it was clear that Fang Mu was definitely in first place in this trial by fire!

Of course, the crowds outside in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were in commotion. When it came to the final two stages of the heart and the Dao, Meng Hao was the first person to ever clear the entire stage. Not even Sir Fan had been able to do so.

Meng Hao had earned everyone’s complete and utter attention!

“He definitely deserves to be in first place!”

“His name will soon shake the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea. He’s going to be number one among all Chosen! Once he joins the Nine Sea God World, if he continues on this path of growth, he’ll definitely become a Divine Son! If he and Fan Dong’er get together, then they’ll definitely become a legend!”

"You guys didn't notice, but in the final twenty thousand deaths, Fang Mu was actually happy! Compared to the pain everyone else was in, that's probably even more frightening!"

As the echo of discussion spread throughout the Ninth Mountain and Sea, Patriarch Reliance was out in the starry sky, looked quite pleased. Then, he suddenly shuddered.

"Dammit! I've been thinking about this wrong! What the hell does that little bastard's life or death have to do with me? His being the center of attention has nothing to do with the Patriarch! We're enemies! Dammit! Dammit! I've been looking at it all wrong!!"

Also somewhere in the starry sky was the 10th Wang Clan Patriarch, his hair disheveled, his eyes narrowed as he looked off into the distance.

"Strong... much stronger than I remember," he murmured. Deep within his eyes flickered the glow of Wang Tengfei's spirit. "Meng Hao, I truly can't wait until the moment when we meet again!" With that, he turned and disappeared into the distance.

In the Kunlun Society, Pill Demon and Chu Yuyan looked on with trembling hearts. Having personally witnessed everything that had gone on in the trial by fire, were they not already aware that Fang Mu was Meng Hao, they would never have possibly drawn a connection between the two.

Fang Mu... really was the complete focus of attention.

"Planet South Heaven is too small," Chu Yuyan murmured, a twinge of obsession visible in her eyes. "You were being held back there. Your world... is out among the stars."

Back on Planet South Heaven, in the Fang Clan in the vast Eastern Lands, Meng Hao's parents looked at the vortex screens with smiles on their faces. Of course, buried within those smiles were emotional sighs.

"Hao'er really is going to leave us," murmured his mother, her voice soft.

After a moment of silence, his father gently said, "Planet South Heaven is too small for him, and was limiting his growth. He was bound to leave South Heaven sooner or later. After this trial by fire is over, I won't try to

get him to stay too long.”

“But he’s just a child,” she replied bitterly.

“He’s grown up. If you don’t let him fly, how can he ever come to know the boundless universe?”

Meanwhile, on Planet West Felicity, Zhao Yifan was polishing his sword, and the desire to fight flashed within his eyes. Then he looked away from the vortex screen up in the sky.

“I must not underestimate all of the other members of my generation out there. I never imagined someone else like Meng Hao of Planet South Heaven existed. But now, this Fang Mu appears in the trial by fire!” The desire to fight burned hot in his eyes.

“I truly hope that you participate in the arena matches!” said Zhao Yifan, taking a deep breath and then closing his eyes. He would of course take part in the arena matches, and would actually lead the disciples of the Sublime Sword Flow Grotto into the fighting.

Only one cultivator from the Nascent Soul, Spirit Severing, and Dao Seeking stages would come out victorious in the arena matches. Then, they would be recruited as a disciple by one of the Three Great Daoist Societies, and become a Conclave disciple at that.

Of course, that didn’t mean that participation was restricted. On the contrary, if disciples from the Three Great Daoist Societies participated and took first place, then they would also be able to join the Conclave.

As far as other sects went, they did not participate for the chance to join a Daoist Society, but rather, for the incredible prizes offered up in the arena matches.

In the Ninth Sea God World, Fan Dong’er sat cross-legged with her eyes closed. Her complexion was ashen, and there seemed to be a trace of Karma in it. For some reason, she kept thinking about Meng Hao, whom she hated with a passion that had permeated even her bones.

Behind her, as always, was the female corpse. When her master saw the corpse, he did not attempt to help her get rid of it. Instead, he told her that

it was good fortune for her.

However, Fan Dong'er did not wish to have good fortune like this.

"How come just looking at this Fang Mu pisses me off!?" thought Fan Dong'er as she looked up at the vortex screen, her graceful brow furrowed. She was another of the Chosen who would participate in the arena matches.

In the Li Clan on Planet North Reed, Li Ling'er's expression was indifferent as she sat cross-legged in the clan's Daoist rite centers. Seated in front of her was a large group of Li Clan members, all of whom were listening to her give a speech about cultivation. To these clan members, Li Ling'er was like a celestial goddess, selfless, incorruptible, and aloof.

Occasionally, the vortex screens up above would draw the attention of the Li Clan members, and even Li Ling'er would occasionally look over.

When the clan members asked her if she would participate in the arena matches...

"Yes, I will!" she responded coolly.

Taiyang Zi, as well as Sun Hai of the Church of the Immortal Emperor, were both required by their sects to participate in the fighting. Virtually all of the sects and clans sent their Chosen to join the arena matches.

Some of them were people Meng Hao knew, but many were Chosen who hadn't ever been to Planet South Heaven.

In the outside world, everyone was preparing for the arena matches. As for Meng Hao, the world around him shattered into pieces. When he reappeared, he was back in the lead position on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking.

Behind him were all the other competitors in the trial by fire. They looked at Meng Hao with awe in their eyes, even the masked young man and the cultivator with the mosquitos.

Meng Hao had used his own strength to crush the other participants in virtually every way.

Ling Yunzi materialized up in midair. He hovered there, looking at the crowd for a moment before speaking.

“The ten stages of testing have concluded,” he said coolly. “Being responsible for the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking, I will now select one thousand people to continue.” With that, he waved his hand, causing several thousand Dao Seeking cultivators to instantly vanish, teleported back to their places of origin.

One thousand people remained.

“All of you have passed the testing phase. Next, you may decide whether or not to participate in the arena matches.

“In the arena matches, anyone who makes it to the top 100 will receive a prize of 1,000 Immortal jades. Perhaps some of you are unfamiliar with Immortal jades. They are objects that can be used in cultivation after you reach the Immortal Realm. They are a rare thing in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. 1,000 Immortal jades is similar in value to 10,000,000 spirit stones.”

Originally, Meng Hao hadn’t been very interested in participating in the arena matches. However, when he heard this, his eyes went wide and began to shine with a bright light.

“10,000,000 spirit stones....” he thought, panting. “The Three Great Daoist Societies are way too rich! You get 10,000,000 spirit stones just for getting in the top 100?!?!” Meng Hao was now feeling a bit excited.

“If you get into the top 16, the prize is 5,000 Immortal jades,” Ling Yunzi continued. As his voice echoed out, Meng Hao got even more excited. All of the remaining participants were now panting eagerly.

“If you reach the top 8, the prize is 10,000 Immortal jades!”

Meng Hao’s mind filled with roaring, and he was mentally adding up how much 10,000 plus 5,000 plus 1,000 Immortal jades was in spirit stones. After finishing the calculation, his eyes began to shine with fierce light.

“The prize for reaching the top 4 is an Immortality Illumination Vine!”

continued Ling Yunzi, which instantly caused many among the thousand remaining participants to cry out loud in disbelief. Meng Hao didn't seem to care too much, but the eyes of the others around him instantly went completely bloodshot.

To most people, Immortal jades were just material wealth, and although they could be used in cultivation, that wouldn't help until the Immortal Realm. However, an Immortality Illumination Vine could completely change one's fate in life, and could make true Immortal Ascension possible!

This was especially important because of the fact that a true Immortal had recently appeared on Planet South Heaven. In the following thousand years, Immortality Illumination Vines could be considered precious treasures to everyone, except perhaps Meng Hao.

They could change fate and determine the future!

There were different prizes offered on the other two Ancient Roads. However, regardless of the stage they were in, when the cultivators found out what rewards that were being offered, it sent their blood boiling. They weren't the only ones. When the crowds in the Ninth Mountain and Sea heard of the prizes available on the three Ancient Roads, their eyes went bloodshot, and they began to breathe heavily. Were it not for the fact that they didn't possess the requisite qualifications, they too would be there to participate in the fighting.

This was especially true when they heard that one of the prizes on the Ancient Path of Dao Seeking was an Immortality Illumination Vine.

"I can't believe the prize is... an Immortality Illumination Vine!!"

"Dammit! If I had known that, I would have participated! In the next thousand years, anyone who has an Immortality Illumination Vine has a high likelihood of becoming a true Immortal!!"

"True Immortality! Although using an Immortality Illumination Vine doesn't measure up to seizing destiny, it doesn't matter how you become a true Immortal among the stars, you're still a true Immortal!!"

Ling Yunzi looked out with satisfaction at all the looks of shock. However, when he looked at Meng Hao, he could tell that although he was cheering like everyone else, it seemed a bit perfunctory. After a moment of thought, Ling Yunzi spoke out again.

“Fang Mu, although you are a Conclave disciple of the Ninth Sea God World, if you don’t perform enough meritorious service in the future, you won’t be awarded with an Immortality Illumination Vine. You must seize this opportunity to acquire one.”

Meng Hao quickly nodded his head, and then suddenly asked, “How many spirit stones is an Immortality Illumination Vine worth?”

Ling Yunzi’s jaw dropped.

“They’re priceless,” he responded. “If you put one up for auction, it’s very likely that it would sell for millions of Immortal jades.”

When Meng Hao heard that, his mind spun, and he began to tremble. Immediately, his eyes went completely bloodshot, and his expression turned completely vicious.

Seeing Meng Hao like this caused Ling Yunzi to clear his throat. He was gradually starting to understand Meng Hao’s personality a bit more.

“Whoever takes first place will receive a prize of....” Ling Yunzi paused dramatically.

“A drop of blood passed down by the Three Great Paragons!”

The response to his words was complete silence. However, there were some people who began to tremble, and expressions of intense disbelief covered their faces, looks that exceeded the ones that had appeared when they were told about the Immortality Illumination Vines. The outside world was quiet too, but only for a moment, after which a great tumult broke out.

“A drop of blood from the Three Great Paragons! Heavens! That would contain the Dao of the Three Great Paragons!!”

“The Three Great Paragons!? According to legend, they were powerful

experts from ancient times. They... they actually left behind a drop of blood!?!?”

“Is this for real?!?!”

Even the Patriarchs in the starry sky palace could hardly believe it. They shot to their feet, panting, expressions of shock written on their faces.

Only Meng Hao didn’t seem to have much of a reaction. However, Ling Yunzi’s next words, which were clearly directed at him, caused Meng Hao’s heart to skip a beat.

“Fang Mu, if you put this drop of Paragon’s blood up for auction, it would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to find someone in the Ninth Mountain who could afford it.”

# Chapter 862: Provocation!

Meng Hao took several more deep breaths, but he was unable to calm himself. Even he had to admit that deep down, his main weakness was... his love of money.

But that wasn't his fault! He had been poor since he was little, and even though lots of people owed him money, those debts hadn't been repaid. Things really weren't easy for him!

When he was young, he had been so poor that he developed a fear of lacking money. After he grew up, he entered the world of cultivation, and still had never really been rich. There was that short period of time in the Milky Way Sea, and his unexpected windfall. However, when he thought about it, the only reason he had been able to save up the money he had now was because he hadn't used the copper mirror in a long time. When he thought about how voraciously the copper mirror consumed wealth, it made Meng Hao feel completely impoverished.

1,000 Immortal jades made him excited. 10,000 sent his blood boiling. The value of the Immortality Illumination Vine made his eyes go bloodshot. Now, there was the drop of Paragon blood, which caused Meng Hao's eyes to go green.

When Ling Yunzi saw that green glow, he stared in shock for a moment. He had never before seen a light like that shining in someone's eyes. This was the first time.

However, it only took a moment for more heavy breathing to be heard. Many of the other participants were much like Meng Hao, and didn't originally understand the value of a drop of Paragon's blood. When they heard Ling Yunzi's second sentence, their minds filled with roaring.

They weren't the only ones. The Patriarchs in the starry sky temple were also panting; to them, a drop of Paragon's blood was like a precious treasure.

They were well aware that an item like that was something that only the Three Great Daoist Societies could possess. They would most certainly not

have very many either. It was a precious treasure, the likes of which was not common in this age. And yet, unthinkably, the Three Great Daoist Societies were offering it up as a prize in this trial by fire.

The Patriarchs from the Three Great Daoist Societies smiled slightly, but did not speak. Obviously, there was some profound meaning behind offering the Paragon's blood as a prize. Actually, it didn't really matter who it was specifically that acquired it. The point was to let everyone know that they had Paragon's blood!

The crowds in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were seething with excitement. Even the Chosen out in the various sects who were preparing to participate in the fighting began to pant. The disciples from the Three Great Daoist Societies were much the same. Although they were members of the Daoist Societies, it would normally be impossible to acquire the things that were being offered as prizes unless they performed some incredible service to the sect.

But now... all they had to do was win first place, and it would be theirs!

Zhao Yifan rose to his feet, bursting with the desire to fight. "Paragon's blood.... It's impossible to say which Paragon, but if I fuse it into my Dao of swords, it will definitely make my Dao even more incisive!"

Fan Dong'er's eyes went wide, and she began to pant.

"With that blood, perhaps I can finally free myself from this corpse!"

Li Ling'er, Taiyang Zi and Sun Hai, as well as the other Chosen, all had similar reactions. There were even some Chosen who had elected not to participate in the fighting, such as Song Luodan and some others, who immediately regretted their decision.

"The arena matches will take place inside the Ruins of Immortality," continued Ling Yunzi. "However, the location will not be here on the three Ancient Roads, but rather, on an ancient Dao Tree located further within!"

"All of you will be given three days of rest, after which, I will personally take you to the ancient Dao Tree!"

"During those three days, if any of you wish to leave, you may do so

freely." With that, Ling Yunzi turned to leave.

"Patriarch, please wait a moment!" Meng Hao hurriedly cried out.

Ling Yunzi stopped in place, then turned back to look at Meng Hao. His eyes were filled with approval, and a smile could be seen on his face.

"What's the matter?"

A bashful smile could be seen on Meng Hao's face as he somewhat embarrassedly said, "Patriarch, er... earlier you mentioned that I could ask for anything I want, and you would give it to me. Well... I think that a drop of Paragon's blood would do nicely."

When Ling Yunzi heard this, his eyes went as wide as saucers. He was just about to rebuke Meng Hao, when he noticed Meng Hao's expression. Then he thought about how stirring all of Meng Hao's actions had been, and his anger cooled.

"That is not something I can personally decide," he said, shaking his head. "How about this: once you get to the sect, we will continue this discussion." With that, he left.

"I knew all along they wouldn't keep their promise," Meng Hao thought. "I should have plucked off the pointer needle on the Feng Shui compass too."

Time passed. None of the thousand participants on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking chose to leave. They all sat down in meditation, taking every moment of opportunity to practice cultivation, hoping to put themselves in top fighting condition.

Most of them felt quite drained from the previous ten stages of the trial by fire. They had expended much, were mentally exhausted, and their cultivation bases were running low. This was especially the case after the final two stages, and their near collapse into complete despair.

The torment they had experienced was severely draining mentally. However, the remaining 1,000 people were naturally outstanding individuals, so they took advantage of every moment to restore their energy.

Meng Hao had his Eternal stratum, so he was the only person who didn't need to spend any time recovering.

"So, there are three more days until the arena matches," he thought. "Why do I have the feeling that I've really lost out on a lot during my time here? I wasn't able to take the floor slabs and decorative tiles from the Warrior Pavilion, not to mention the shelving. There wasn't any time....

"The Three Great Daoist Societies took the Feng Shui compass as well." He turned to look over at the trial by fire contestants on the other altars, then suddenly felt a flash of inspiration. He stood up and flew to the edge of the altar, and as he neared, sensed an intense pressure. A faint rumbling sound could also be heard.

The rumbling immediately attracted the attention of the other thousand participants. They looked over with wide eyes to see what Meng Hao was doing, and instantly, their faces began to flicker. Even the people in the outside world noticed and were shocked.

"What's he doing?"

"He needs to calm down! Why is he trying to move off of the altar?"

In the palace in the starry sky, the Patriarchs of the various clans looked on with shock. Ling Yunzi suddenly appeared as well, and he looked on in astonishment.

Meng Hao had once again succeeded in drawing all attention onto himself. As he moved out into the gap between his altar and the one behind it, the pressure grew even more intense. Finally, massive rumbling filled the air, and great beads of sweat broke out on Meng Hao's forehead. He began to tremble, and yet, his eyes shone with a brilliant light.

When the spectators in the Ninth Mountain and Sea saw this, they immediately picked up on what they thought were the hidden details, and began to heave sighs of praise.

"He's practicing cultivation!"

"He definitely deserves to have taken first place in the trial by fire! Even during the three days of rest before the arena matches, he actually refuses

to waste time, and is working hard at cultivation!"

Soon, everyone came to the conclusion that the only possible explanation for Meng Hao's actions was that he was practicing cultivation.

The Patriarchs in the starry sky palace began to nod in approval.

"Excellent. Using the pressure weighing down on the Ancient Roads to practice cultivation. Considering the level of pressure, cultivating there for three days is like spending thirty days in the outside world. If you spent longer, you would get even more used to the pressure, and once you were released, would be able to unleash explosive might. Such a thing would give you much greater momentum going into the arena battles."

"No wonder he was able to take first place in the trial by fire. His awareness of cultivation is deeper than most people could comprehend."

As the Patriarchs nodded and discussed the matter, the three elders from the Three Great Daoist Societies were all smiling.

Meanwhile, the Chosen from the various sects on the outside were practicing cultivation in preparation for the arena matches. They cared little about most of the people they would be facing up against. However, there were some that had left them with deep impressions. Meng Hao, of course, was the one from whom they felt the most pressure.

When the Chosen saw Meng Hao practicing cultivation out in the pressure of the Ancient Roads, their expressions became serious.

"In a situation like that, to be able to think up such a method to practice cultivation...This Fang Mu really is extraordinary," said Zhao Yifan.

"This Fang Mu will be a formidable adversary." Fan Dong'er frowned.

Li Ling'er, Taiyang Zi, and Sun Hai all had solemn expressions on their faces.

Back on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking, Ling Yunzi hovered in the void, slowly nodding his head, the look of praise on his face growing even deeper.

Slowly, the participants on the other altars began to react. Quite a few began to imitate Meng Hao, and stepped off the altars and into the pressure. However, none of them could last for very long before being forced to return to their altars.

That only served to increase their awe of Meng Hao.

Four hours passed by, after which Meng Hao finally managed to close in on the nearest altar. On that altar, Li Yan's pupil's constricted. Although he had long put himself on guard inwardly, his expression didn't change, and he looked over at Meng Hao coldly.

He had also attempted to move out into the pressure outside the altar, but had only been able to last for an hour before being forced to return. As for Meng Hao, he had persisted for four hours; that was something that left Li Yan completely shocked.

At first, he assumed Meng Hao would only rest for a bit and then go back, but in complete contrast to his expectations, Meng Hao actually approached him.

"Fellow Daoist Fang, come no closer!" he said, his eyes glittering coldly. His hair was already standing on end, and he couldn't be any more vigilant. He waved his hand, causing a shield to immediately appear, bursting with energy.

The scene instantly attracted quite a bit of attention. The people in the crowds in the outside world all began to look over.

"Fellow Daoist," Meng Hao responded with a smile, "don't get the wrong idea. I have no ill intentions. I'm just here to sell some medicinal pills. Look, right here, I happen to have a wonderful Spirit Reviving Pill." With that, he adroitly produced a medicinal pill from his bag of holding.

"One pill will completely enliven you, and will increase your energy by a hundredfold. How about this: for 100,000 spirit stones, I'm willing to part with this medical pill and give it to you!" He looked over at Li Yan.

Li Yan was staring with wide eyes, as were all of the other competitors in the trial by fire. Up in midair, Ling Yunzi was in complete shock.

The crowds in the outside world looked on agape, and all of the Chosen were staring fixedly. Even the Patriarchs in the starry sky palace were gaping.

“He... he expended all that effort, fought back against that enormous pressure, just to... just to sell some medicinal pills?!?!”

“And he wants 100,000 spirit stones for a Spirit Reviving Pill? That’s... that’s way too expensive!”

Ling Yunzi wasn’t sure whether to laugh or cry. At first he wanted to get angry, but then he thought about how sensitive Meng Hao was regarding spirit stones, as well as the stirring matter of the Feng Shui compass, and he sighed.

“This kid is definitely a rogue cultivator. He’s no doubt experienced many hardships in his practice of cultivation. Therefore, he has a strong attachment to spirit stones.”

Li Yan looked hesitantly at Meng Hao. He actually did want to buy the medicinal pill. The problem wasn’t about the amount of spirit stones, but that he didn’t dare to actually buy it. At this moment, he wasn’t sure if he could trust that what Fang Mu was saying was true or not.

After a long moment, Li Yan carefully replied, “Fellow... Fellow Daoist Fang, I actually have my own medicinal pills.”

“Oh, I see,” said Meng Hao, looking disappointed. He then turned to look at the participants on the other altars.

Most of them looked back silently. However, there happened to be a middle-aged man who stood six altars away from where Meng Hao currently was. He looked on with an arrogant expression.

“I can’t believe someone who cares so much about money could take first place,” he called out. “I’ve really been blind. If you can personally deliver those medicinal pills to me, then however many you want to sell, I, Zhao, will buy.”

“However, I’ll only wait for half a day. If you can’t make it here in that amount of time, then you’ll just have to scram.”

Meng Hao looked up at the middle-aged man. Then, a bashful smile appeared.

# Chapter 863: Pill Delivery Service!

Meng Hao stood there on the second altar, looking at the man standing on the eighth altar. There were a total of five altars standing between them!

This man was one of the thousand participants on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking, and back home, he was a Chosen. That was why he was able to stick out so well on the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking.

Originally, he had believed himself capable of struggling his way into the top ten, but the brutality of the trial by fire had resulted in him sustaining some severe blows to his self-confidence. However, during the three trials of talent, cultivation, and age, he had taken second place in the trial of talent. He had been very excited about that, but then Meng Hao had thrown everything into chaos, the result being that few people had taken note of him.

Jealousy of Meng Hao had taken deep root within him then and there. Then, Meng Hao's spectacular performance in the other stages had caused that jealousy to transform into bone-deep hatred.

Of course, he was not a witless person. If he was going to attempt to humiliate Meng Hao in full view of everyone, he would definitely have to ensure his own safety. That was why he had put a half-day time limit on his offer.

He did not believe that Meng Hao could possibly make it to him in half a day. After all, Meng Hao had spent roughly four hours to get to the second altar. Half a day contained twelve hours, so therefore, the man was confident that Meng Hao would not be able to reach him.

"If the time passes and he still comes, he won't be able to do anything at all to me. There are rules, after all! If he tries to attack me, the Three Great Daoist Societies will intervene. That he's a disciple of the Ninth Sea God World... makes no difference!"

"Rewards come only with risk. If I humiliate Fang Mu, people will definitely notice me. This is my opportunity to get my name out there to

the sects. This is my chance to get noticed!" The man's eyes flickered, and his mouth turned up into a cold smile.

A bit of a bashful smile tugged at Meng Hao's lips. He nodded at Li Yan, then turned and headed toward the edge of the altar. When he stepped out into the void, the pressure of the outside once again weighed down on him. Meng Hao was like a rowboat in an angry sea, his robes whipping about. However, he proceeded forward with firm steadfastness, moving ahead one bit at a time.

When he started out toward the next altar, it instantly caused all of the competitors in the trial by fire to look over. Their eyes glittered as various thoughts ran through their heads.

"Even if Fang Mu does something more spectacular than he already has, I don't think he can get to that man in half a day."

"That's not very smart. He should just have put up with the man's words and waited to handle the matter after the arena matches."

"That guy really is malicious. He's smart though. He actually went out of his way to provoke Fang Mu. If he ends up humiliating him, he'll really earn a name for himself."

The remaining competitors in the trial by fire were intelligent people, and they quickly understood what was going on.

Up in midair, Ling Yunzi looked on with a cool expression. Considering the level of his cultivation base, he wouldn't pay too much attention to the competitors jockeying for positions. However, he couldn't help but feel quite a bit of admiration for Meng Hao, and began to watch, wondering if Meng Hao would be able to reach his destination in less than half a day.

The cultivators out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea looked on with interest, and quite a few of them realized what the middle-aged man was thinking. There were, of course, varying opinions about the matter.

"This Fang Mu is a bit impulsive."

"He shouldn't have tried to sell those medicinal pills. He's just giving his opponents an opportunity and invitation to humiliate him."

The Patriarchs up in the starry sky palace settled their qi and calmed their minds. The conflicts between the trial by fire competitors weren't something they would pay close attention to. However, considering everything that Meng Hao had accomplished, many of them were waiting to see how he would resolve this issue.

"This is actually a test in and of itself," said the Patriarch from the Church of the Immortal Emperor. "The previous stages all tested internal weaknesses. A person's response to provocation can reveal a lot about their instincts." Many others nodded in response.,

Time passed by. Two hours later, Meng Hao was moving along at a quick pace. He was now between the second and third altars, and the pressure weighing down on him from the surrounding void sent his hair whipping about. However, his expression was calm, and he continued without pause.

The other competitors were all silently shaking their heads. They knew that the half-day timetable was something Meng Hao couldn't meet.

The middle-aged man's facial expression was one of complete complacency. When he'd opened his mouth earlier, it had actually been with some nervousness, but now he was completely calm and even laughing.

"Fang Mu, you only have half a day! If you can't make it here by then, you can just get the hell back to your own altar. After half a day passes, even if you offer your medicinal pills to me for free, I won't take them."

The arrogance in his tone was extremely apparent.

Meng Hao looked up at the man far off in the distance, and smiled. He proceeded forward, taking about an hour to get to the third altar.

This time he finished the trip an hour faster than the last time, which was of course shocking to many onlookers. However, of the twelve hour time limit, there were now only nine hours left. The middle-aged man looked even more relaxed, and laughingly called out.

"Fang Mu, you have five altars to go, but only nine hours left! You'd best

take advantage of your time. I'm curious to see how many altars you can get under your belt before the nine hours is up!"

Meng Hao smiled bashfully, then stepped out into the void once again. The pressure surrounded him, and his energy surged. Boundless light radiated off of him, and he continued onward without pause. Although he was moving slower, and the pressure was increasing, he managed to reach the fourth altar in only two hours.

That gave rise to quite a bit of astonishment among the onlookers. The middle-aged man's face flickered a bit, but he called out just as arrogantly as before.

"So what? There are still four altars between us, and you only have seven hours! Do you really think you can make it here?"

"I don't need that much time," said Meng Hao, his first time speaking to the middle-aged man. Even as he spoke, lightning crackled out around him and he stepped out into the void. Rumbling echoed out because of his incredible speed, almost as if from friction. This time, he used only one hour to set foot onto the fifth altar.

"What!?" Many of the trial by fire competitors jumped to their feet, their expressions that of astonishment. The spectators out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were also looking on wide-eyed.

To cross the gap between two of the altars in only one hour required astonishing speed. That was especially true considering that his first attempt had taken a full four hours.

"Was he intentionally holding back the first time around? Or is he just getting used to the pressure!"

"Is this Fang Mu really going to pull off some kind of miracle!?"

The outside world was in an uproar, and the middle-aged man's face had fallen. He was panting as he stared at Meng Hao, fully cognizant of the fact that there were only three altars between them.

In terms of the time limit, there were six hours left!

“Impossible!” thought the man. His face was ashen, and his eyes wide as he looked over at Meng Hao charging toward him. There was a shy smile on Meng Hao’s face, and it seemed almost apologetic.

Next, Meng Hao strode out to cross the void. This time, his speed was such that he only needed the time it takes an incense stick to burn before landing with a bang on the sixth altar. He was now very close to the middle-aged man on the eighth altar.

Without even a pause, he proceeded from the sixth altar out into the void toward the seventh altar. This time, he didn’t even need the time it takes an incense stick to burn before he was standing at the edge of the seventh altar, looking at the middle-aged man not too far off in the distance.

The man’s scalp was numb as he rose to his feet, an expression of astonishment on his face.

“Impossible!!” he said, trembling, and edging backward slowly. He now felt incredible regret, and if he had a chance to do things over, he would definitely never have chosen to provoke Fang Mu.

All of the surrounding competitors were also astonished, especially the cultivators on the seventh altar where Meng Hao currently stood. They quickly rose to their feet and made a path for Meng Hao to walk through, clasping hands and bowing deeply at the same time.

Meng Hao’s might left them all stunned. The cultivators watching from outside in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were equally shocked, especially the Chosen. They stared at Meng Hao on the vortex screens, and by now, had placed him in a very high position mentally.

In the starry sky palace, the Patriarchs had strange looks in their eyes.

Ling Yunzi hovered in midair, smiling slightly and looking at Meng Hao with admiration. His cultivation base was profound, and he had long since seen through the various clues. This was not a case of Meng Hao concealing his cultivation base, but rather, him becoming accustomed to the pressure in the place.

“For him to be able to create Paragon magic, to have the image of the Pāramitā Bridge in his heart, and considering the profundity of his cultivation base, very few types of pressure under Heaven would be able to stop him.”

Now many among the crowds of trial by fire competitors were looking over mockingly at the middle-aged man. His face was ashen, and he was trembling. Earlier, he had been surrounded by no small amount of fellow competitors, but now, they had all edged away from him.

“It’s never a good idea to provoke people, and yet this guy chose to provoke Fang Mu.”

The middle-aged man trembled, and his heart was pounding. Roaring filled his mind, and he had no time to think of any more ideas as Meng Hao flew out and crossed the last void in the space of twenty breaths of time.

Meng Hao looked like an Immortal Divinity as he flew through the void to appear directly in front of the middle-aged man. All of the other competitors immediately clasped hands and bowed, then backed away.

The man trembled and stared fixedly at Meng Hao. After taking a deep breath, he then let out a cold snort.

“Fellow Daoist Fang, clearly you have a profound cultivation base to be able to come here personally. Fine, I, Zhao, will buy your medicinal pill.” With that, he produced a bag of holding which he tossed over.

“There are 100,000 spirit stones in there. Take them and leave.”

Meng Hao smiled as he caught the bag of holding. Then his expression turned a bit bashful.

“Oh, this won’t do,” he said. “I have a lot of Spirit Refreshing Pills, you know.” With that he patted his old bag of holding to produce... a pill bottle.

He waved the pill bottle in front of the middle-aged man’s face. Inside were dozens of medicinal pills.

The middle-aged man's eyes went wide, and he began to inch backward.

"You never said how many you had! You...."

"Huh?!" In one moment, Meng Hao had a sincere smile on his face, but the next, it darkened.

"I came here from all the way over there to deliver medicinal pills to you! And now you're not going to buy them!?" He stepped forward until he was directly in front of the man, and then his hand lashed out.

The man tried to fight back, but how could he possibly be a match for Meng Hao? A boom could be heard, and blood sprayed out of the man's mouth. Meng Hao grabbed his hair and shoved him down onto the ground.

# Chapter 864: The Real Ruins of Immortality!

“Trying to make a fool of me?” growled Meng Hao, killing intent flickering in his eyes. He lifted his right foot up and kicked down viciously onto the man. Cracking sounds could be heard, and blood sprayed from the man’s mouth. Bones were smashed, and the man opened his mouth to say something, but in that moment, a vicious expression appeared on Meng Hao’s face and he punched downward.

A boom echoed out. Meng Hao had attacked viciously, immediately prompting a miserable shriek from the middle-aged man. He was now broken and bleeding, miserable to the extreme.

“Misunderstanding! Fellow Daoist Fang, this was just a misunderstanding!”

“Misunderstanding my ass!” Meng Hao leapt up into the air and then trampled down onto the man’s face. A bloodcurdling scream rang out. The man was now soaked in blood, cradling his head in his arms as Meng Hao thrashed him.

“Wanna buy my stuff? Buy it! Don’t wanna buy it? You’re gonna buy it anyway!” Meng Hao grabbed the man by the hair, lifted his head up, and then slammed it back down into the ground.

Before the man could even scream, Meng Hao lifted his right leg up and kicked down hard. A crack could be heard as the man’s leg was shattered!

This scene of explosive violence, and the rapid change in Meng Hao’s facial expression, caused all of the surrounding onlookers to stare in complete, jaw-dropping shock.

The audiences outside in the Ninth Mountain and Sea gasped, and stared blankly at what was happening on the vortex screens. Meng Hao’s savagery left them totally astonished.

“This guy is definitely someone you can’t provoke!”

"What a brutal personality! He's definitely someone to avoid pissing off!"

"I can't believe that a cultivator with a scholarly aura like that could have such a violent temper!!"

The Chosen from the various sects were also taken aback, some more than others. For example, Sun Hai looked on with wide eyes, panting. He watched blankly as Fang Mu grabbed the middle-aged man's hair, and then Sun Hai began to tremble. He suddenly called to mind something that had happened to him that he would never be able to forget for the rest of his life, a completely humiliating and embarrassing memory.

"This seems... somewhat similar.... But that's not him, is it...?" Sun Hai hesitated for a moment. After recalling that certain person, a tremor ran through him. The whole incident was a nightmare. After returning to the Church of the Immortal Emperor, he had often been jolted out of meditation by the shocking memories. Furthermore, he had shaved his hair, and was now completely bald.



"From now on, call me Li'l Hai!"

In the starry sky palace, the Patriarchs looked on with wide eyes, staring in shock as Meng Hao violently beat the middle-aged man. At first, they were completely shocked, but then they began to chuckle.

"This Fang Mu's personality is kind of amusing."

"He exacts revenge for the slightest offense, and isn't willing to suffer

any losses whatsoever. Well, truth be told, the other man was the one who started the whole thing.”

On the Ancient Road of Dao Seeking, Ling Yunzi chuckled and shook his head, pretending as if he hadn’t seen what was happening.

The middle-aged man was dripping with blood, and was both screaming miserably and also trying to fight back. However, the more he struggled, the more ruthlessly Meng Hao beat him. More cracking sounds echoed out as another bone was broken.

Of the surrounding trial by fire competitors, one after another gasped, and all of them were looking at Meng Hao with intense terror in their eyes. They were so afraid of Meng Hao that their scalps were numb.

“This guy seemed perfectly normal! How could he be so brutal!?”

“Must not provoke him! Absolutely must not provoke him!”

Meng Hao’s eyes flashed with killing intent, and he jabbed two fingers of his right hand toward the middle-aged man’s eyes.

The man let out a miserable shriek and then urgently cried out, “Buy! I’ll buy!”

The words floated into Meng Hao’s ears like a melody of nature. His right hand stopped in place, and the brutal, vicious expression on his face vanished, to be replaced by a bashful smile and a somewhat embarrassed expression.

He cleared his throat and then said, “Well, look at you! Why didn’t you speak up earlier?”

He quickly squatted down and, as the trembling middle-aged man looked at him with terror in his eyes, slowly helped him to his feet.

“You don’t need to help me up, really....” The simple action of being helped to his feet caused the man to be even more frightened than before, and he began trembling violently. Before he could even finish speaking, though, Meng Hao glared at him, and he didn’t dare to say another word.

“This pill bottle is full of Spirit Reviving Pills,” said Meng Hao. “Delivery

fee included, one pill costs 200,000 spirit stones. There are a total of 15 pills, so that's a total of 3,000,000 spirit stones." He placed the pill bottle into the man's hand and then looked at him expectantly, eyes gleaming.

The man was on the verge of bursting into tears. The single thought that occupied him now was just to get Meng Hao to leave as quickly as possible, lest he find himself in an even more deadly situation.

"Okay, I'll buy them...." The middle-aged man immediately produced a vast quantity of spirit stones.

Meng Hao's eyes gleamed as he caught sight of the huge amount of the spirit stones that were still left in the man's bag of holding. He obviously had quite a few left over even after buying the pills. Meng Hao cursed the fact that he only had one bottle of Spirit Reviving Pills in his bag of holding.

"Look, you're a customer, so I'm responsible for your safety," Meng Hao said solemnly. "Tell me who it was that beat you up, okay? Or, well, never mind. That's not important. The important thing is that you're hurt, and you're going to be participating in the arena matches that begin in two days. But you don't need to worry, Fellow Daoist. I have more medicinal pills!"

"These are top-notch injury-treating pills, for only 200,000 per pill. Don't worry, I'm honest and fair with all customers." Meng Hao immediately pulled out seven or eight pill bottles, which he then handed to the middle-aged man.

The man stared in shock. He really and truly wanted to weep now. For a moment, he considered not buying them, but when he looked at Meng Hao and his bashful smile, he began to shiver uncontrollably. Gritting his teeth, he purchased each and every one of the pills.

Meng Hao took a deep breath, then began to stare at the man's bag of holding, his eyes shining brightly. Clearing his throat, he said, "Fellow Daoist, considering the level of your injuries, I don't think those medicinal pills are enough. It seems even your Nascent Divinity was injured."

"What?" The middle-aged man's scalp was going numb. His Nascent

Divinity had not, in fact, been injured, but when he saw the look in Meng Hao's eyes, he knew that it very easily could be.

The man scowled miserably, and his heart was filled with intense regret. He was already starting to run out of spirit stones; these were his life savings, including special rewards given to him by his sect.

"Fellow Daoist Fang, let me go, alright?" he pleaded. "It really was my mistake...." Of course, deep inside, his hatred burned, and he wanted to tear Meng Hao into pieces.

Meng Hao smiled, but his eyes were completely cold as he said, "You know, the first person I ever killed was also surnamed Zhao." 1

The man trembled, and he felt like a cold breeze was filling his entire body. Gritting his teeth, he pulled out some more spirit stones and bought Meng Hao's new medicinal pills. By now, his bag of holding was completely empty.

Meng Hao nodded in satisfaction, then patted the man on the shoulder.

"If you have any other needs, don't hesitate to call me over."

The middle-aged man trembled and nodded.

Meng Hao turned and stepped back out into the void. This time, his trip all the way back to his original position on the first altar only took about an hour. The entire way, the other trial by fire competitors clasped hands and bowed, making way for him, their eyes filled with fear.

Back on the first altar, Meng Hao sat down cross-legged and began to take inventory of everything he had acquired. Looking at the accumulation of spirit stones inside, he finally felt as if his trip here hadn't been a waste.

"It's too bad that Warrior Pavilion was so stingy, though," he thought. "All I did was take a few magical items, right? I didn't take the floor tiles or the shelving. I didn't even touch the decorative tiles!"

"Back in the Bridge of Immortal Treading, I dug up all the floor tiles!" When he thought about how stingy the Warrior Pavilion was, his hatred grew. There was nothing he hated more than stingy people.

"Well, in any case, a lot of small gains can add up to a windfall. As long as I keep going in life, then one of these days, I'm going to be the richest person in the all the Nine Mountains and Seas!" Thinking about his grand aspirations, he took a deep breath. For some reason he felt as if he was now one step closer to fulfilling his dreams.

"When I find Xu Qing, the two of us will always have more than enough money to spend." He sighed emotionally.

Time passed by, and soon the three day rest period had ended. The trial by fire competitors opened their eyes, and bright gleams could be seen. With Meng Hao there, most had no thoughts of trying to take first place; they just hoped to make it into the top 8!

Ling Yunzi materialized out of the void and glanced over the crowds.

"The arena matches will be held in the ancient Dao Tree of the Ruins of Immortality. All of you must keep one point firmly in mind. The location of the Dao Tree cannot be considered the depths of the Ruins of Immortality, but it is still a place of extreme danger. Virtually anything could happen outside of the tree while you participate in the fighting. Remember... you must not, under any circumstances, leave the ancient Dao Tree.

"Only by staying on the tree itself can you guarantee your safety. If you leave the tree... it is impossible to say whether you will survive or not!" Ling Yunzi gazed sternly at the competitors, then waved his hand. Immediately, a red glow sprung up everywhere, and the void trembled. Ripples spread out as everything present, including Meng Hao, flew up into the air. Ling Yunzi suddenly seemed to grow incredibly large, whereupon he swished his sleeve, causing everyone to fly inside of it.

This scene caused Meng Hao's heart to tremble!

"What an extraordinary divine ability!" he thought, panting. After all the trial by fire competitors were pulled into Ling Yunzi's sleeve, they could clearly see the outside world whizzing by, and knew that Ling Yunzi was now moving forward at incredible speed.

The audiences in the outside world watched as similar scenes played out

on the Ancient roads of the Nascent Soul and Spirit Severing. The two old men in those locations also flew up, and soon joined Ling Yunzi as they flew off into the distance.

The path they traveled was covered with mist, and occasionally, wails and howls could be heard echoing about, as well as terrifying roars. Gradually, an enormous head became visible, floating there in the mists. Blood oozed out of its eyes, ears, nose, and mouth, and an enormous centipede could be seen burrowing in and out of its eyes.

When the crowds on the outside saw these things, they gasped and stared at the vortex screens in shock.

“Ruins of Immortality! These are the real Ruins of Immortality!!”

“That giant’s head is at least ten thousand meters tall!!”

Inside of Ling Yunzi’s sleeve, Meng Hao could see everything that was happening outside. He also saw the giant’s head, and he couldn’t help but feel shocked as they passed it by.

More time passed. The mists grew thicker, and the wailing undulated endlessly. Eventually, a huge vine appeared up ahead, swinging back and forth. Shockingly, there were countless corpses bound up on the vine, corpses that were ancient and shriveled, and yet who possessed magical items and treasures that were related to bags of holding.

Considering that the items still existed after all these years, it showed that... this vine was incredibly mighty, and would tolerate no incursions.

Several days passed, during which time Meng Hao saw countless bizarre things. He saw an enormous ball of fur the size of a planet. He saw a gigantic bleeding eye. He saw an army of cultivators in tattered clothes, walking slowly through the void with blank looks on their faces.

Each of those cultivators was so powerful that Meng Hao found it difficult to breathe.

Most shocking of all, though, was when Meng Hao saw... a ship, floating slowly through the mists. Meng Hao was not unfamiliar with this ship, and when he saw it, his mind trembled. This was the same ship he had

seen in the Milky Way Sea, and just like before, an old man sat at the prow!!

\*

1. Meng Hao killed a guy named Zhao Wugang in chapter 9.

# Chapter 865: Sixth Demon Sealing Hex!

Seven days went by. Ling Yunzi and the other two old men gradually began to decrease their speed, and looks of concentration appeared on their faces. Although they had made this trip on numerous occasions, every time they did, it was with the utmost caution. These were the Ruins of Immortality, not some other random location. Although not every single step was filled with danger, there were still many shocking things that could fill even them with senses of deadly crisis.

One misstep, and they might end up being buried in this place. Furthermore, this was a trial by fire, so if there were any accidents, they wouldn't be the only ones who died; all of the people stored inside their massive sleeves would go along with them.

If that happened, it would be a huge blow to the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Ling Yunzi and the others stopped in place for a moment to perform some incantations of augury. Then they exchanged glances, and one of them commented, "Are the lives of the Chosen from the great sects really that much more valuable than all the other lives?"

Ling Yunzi shook his head and declined to answer. Whereas the three of them were personally escorting all of the trial by fire competitors, the Chosen from the great sects would simply wait for them to arrive at the ancient Dao Tree. There, a teleportation portal would be set up, and they could go to the place directly.

The teleportation portal would only be able to remain active for the space of about ten breaths of time, and could only handle a volume of about one hundred people. Even that would require a huge expenditure of resources.

That price would be split between the various sects, all to ensure that their Chosen would reach their destination without any complications.

"There are still ten hours left before the entrance appears," said the old man who carried the Spirit Severing competitors. "Why don't we rest for a

bit?" With that, he sat down cross-legged.

The one who had complained before was the old man carrying the Nascent Soul cultivators. He gave a cold harrumph and looked off into the distance.

"Let's bring the competitors out and let them take a look around," said Ling Yunzi. "This ten hour period should be relatively safe." He swished his sleeve, and the one thousand Dao Seeking cultivators, including Meng Hao, immediately appeared. Many of them gasped as they were finally able to personally see the surroundings. Their minds were clearly shaken, but none of them spoke a single word.

Moments later, the Spirit Severing and Nascent Soul experts appeared in vast groups. They looked around at their surroundings and sharp inhalations of breath could be heard everywhere.

"Do nothing rash, and do not stray too far," Ling Yunzi said, his voice echoing about. "We are now in the real Ruins of Immortality, and there are many dangers lurking about. Considering the level of your cultivation bases, you would never normally be able to come to a place like this. Since you're here with us now, take a moment to experience what it feels like. You can consider this one of your rewards."

Meng Hao took a deep breath as he looked around. They were surrounded by mists, some thin, some thick. Many areas radiated intense pressure. Clearly, there were different areas, some of which were possible for people of greater power to enter, other areas not so much.

The area they occupied contained the weakest pressure of all. Furthermore, the three old men were pushing back, reducing the power by at least half. Even with much of the power being deflected by the three old men, it was still difficult for many of the competitors to hold up.

The majority of the Nascent Soul and Spirit Severing cultivators were meditating cross-legged. The remainder that were not forced to focus fully on fighting back against the pressure, were examining their surroundings. Among the Dao Seeking cultivators, about half were meditating, with the remaining several hundred moving about in the area.

Meng Hao walked ahead until he was about three hundred meters out. There, he stopped. He suddenly had the feeling that the pressure would increase explosively if he proceeded any further. He stood there silently for a moment before smacking his bag of holding to produce a flying sword. He gradually extended it out, and when it went past the three hundred meter mark, cracking sounds could be heard. Fissures spread out across the sword, and after a few breaths of time, it disintegrated into ash.

“Five breaths of time,” he thought, his eyes glittering. The flying sword he had used just now was a Spirit Severing treasure, and yet here, it could only last for five breaths of time.

Shaking his head, Meng Hao began to back away from the three hundred meter mark, when suddenly, a voice echoed into his mind.

“Come... come....”

He stopped in his tracks, and his eyes began to shine with a brilliant light. As he looked out into the Ruins of Immortality, the voice continued to echo in his mind. He turned to look at the people behind him, but apparently, not even Ling Yunzi and the other two could hear what he was hearing. It seemed that only he could detect the voice.

At the same time that the voice echoed out, the ancient Demon Sealing Jade in his bag of holding suddenly began to emanate flickering light.

The Demon Sealing Jade had remained dormant for a very long time, but now it was glowing once again. However, unlike the previous occasions, it did not speak.

The voice from moments before continued to speak.

“League of Demon Sealers... come here... come to me....” As the voice spoke, the mist in front of Meng Hao seemed to weaken and change, as... a path appeared.

Meng Hao’s mind trembled as he looked at the path. He did not walk forward, but rather, began to edge backward. He knew that the level of his cultivation base placed him at the peak of his peers. However, when you considered the Mountain and Sea Realm as a whole, he was merely in the

Spirit Realm, which made him very weak.

This path might lead to good fortune, but considering the level of his cultivation base, that good fortune could very well lead to his death.

In the moment that he stepped backward, the voice continued on with even more urgency.

"The League of Demon Sealers.... I am a member too. Come to me, I shall give you good fortune.... I shall give you destiny to step upon the Heavens, to achieve a meteoric rise! You can directly become Immortal!"

The more the voice tried to persuade him, the more Meng Hao backed up. When he had backed up about thirty meters, the mist in front of him suddenly began to churn, as if some incredible power were approaching, heading directly toward Meng Hao.

His face fell, and he began to speed backward. By this time, Ling Yunzi and the others had sensed that something was happening. Faces flickering, the three of them immediately sprung into action, pulling all of the trial by fire competitors back into their sleeves, and at the same time, striding forward to stand next to Meng Hao. By this point, the swirling mists had spread to reveal a figure.

It was a cultivator whose body was in a state of decomposition. His head was half destroyed, and his clothes were tattered. An archaic, rotting aura emanated out from him, and he was surrounded by swirling mists. In his hand, he held a tattered banner, and he stood there, staring listlessly at Ling Yunzi and the others with his one remaining eye.

Ling Yunzi and the other old men stared at the man as if he were a deadly enemy. Their energy surged, and the light of magical techniques began to swirl around them.

"Senior, you have already perished," said Ling Yunzi. "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust. We of the junior generation are still alive, and are just passing through here. We disturbed your rest, please forgive us. Senior, kindly return from whence you came!"

The half-headed figure slowly raised his right hand and pointed a

decomposing finger directly at Meng Hao.

“I... want... him....”

Ling Yunzi’s face fell, as did those of the other two old men.

Breathing heavily, Meng Hao backed up until he was behind the three old men. As he stared at the figure, his heart trembled. It was at this point that he noticed that the half-headed man... had a sword stabbed into his waist.

The sword was pitch black and emanated a freezing aura. However, Meng Hao could also tell that the sword possessed Demon Sealing power. It only took a moment for him to realize that it was the power of a Demon Sealing Hex!

It was at this moment that the ancient Demon Sealing Jade in his bag of holding finally spoke into his mind with its archaic voice.

“Sixth Demon Sealing Hex!”

Ling Yunzi placed his right hand onto his bag of holding. “Senior,” he said, “Please don’t push us too far!”

The half-headed man suddenly looked over at him, and flames leapt up within his single remaining eye. He suddenly lurched forward, the mists surrounding him seething, as if they contained countless vengeful souls, screaming miserably. He waved the banner, and rumbling sounds could be heard as mist poured toward the three old men.

Ling Yunzi’s face flickered and he let out a roar, unhesitatingly slapping his bag of holding to produce a talisman.

It was an ancient talisman that emanated a boundlessly archaic aura. It seemed to have existed through countless years of time. All it depicted was a simple, smiling face. However, as soon as it appeared, the half-headed man stopped in place, and even the incoming mists stopped, seemingly stuck permanently in place, not daring to get any closer.

Ling Yunzi took a deep breath, performed an incantation gesture, and then pointed out. The talisman immediately floated up into midair. At the

same time, Ling Yunzi grabbed Meng Hao and then shot backward at top speed. The other two old men also retreated, leaving the talisman floating there in the air.

"I can't believe we ran into a revenant here. That talisman should hold it in place for twenty hours." Ling Yunzi frowned and looked over at Meng Hao. "How did you draw its attention?"

Meng Hao smiled wryly, unsure of exactly what to say.

"It probably has nothing to do with him," said the man carrying the Spirit Severing cultivators, who happened to be from the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite. "The revenants here usually just look for people they think will be suitable to help them to return to life. We've run into them before, haven't we?"

Meng Hao hesitated for a moment, then asked, "Seniors, what is... a revenant?"

"Some ancient cultivators left strands of resentful will behind when they died. Those strands of will exist outside of the natural law of the Mountain and Sea Realm, and continuously attempt to return to life. Those are revenants."

Meng Hao nodded and looked back at the half-headed man. He had a mind to go and try to retrieve the sword, but he knew that it was impossible to do so. Inwardly, he sighed with regret.

Soon, ten hours had passed, and the surrounding mists were churning. Meng Hao was back in Ling Yunzi's sleeve, and yet, was still able to see the world outside. Shockingly, off in the distance... was an indescribably large corpse.

It was so huge that Meng Hao could do nothing less than gasp. It seemed larger than a planet, seemingly without end. A cultivator who stood in front of it would be smaller than an ant.

The corpse appeared to be almost like an enormous continent, hanging there in the void.

As Ling Yunzi and the other two old men flew forward, they each

produced a magical symbol that caused their bodies to emanate a gray light. They shot toward the huge body, and in the blink of an eye, touched down onto it and then sped forward.

Meng Hao looked on gaping as Ling Yunzi and the other two continued onward for an entire month at an indescribable speed. Despite that, they still had not crossed the entirety of the corpse. Eventually, a tree appeared up ahead.

It was a gargantuan, shocking, ancient tree.

Apparently, the tree was growing directly up from within the corpse, as if it was using the corpse's blood and flesh as nutrients.

The trunk of the tree stretched high up into the air, until, at a certain point, two huge branches split off in opposite directions, making it look like an enormous fork.

The tree was covered with innumerable leaves, each one of which was fully three hundred meters wide. The leaves did not bend downward, but spread out evenly like platforms.

"We're here!" said Ling Yunzi. He and the other two came to a stop, then waved their hands, causing all of the competitors to fly out from within their sleeves and land on the tree leaves.

# Chapter 866: I Am a God!

The crowds in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were watching on the vortex screens, and could see everything that Ling Yunzi and the others encountered.

That included the decomposing, half-headed man, as well as all the other things lurking in the mists.

Many gasps could be heard from the cultivators in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. For most of them, this was their first time ever seeing the Ruins of Immortality. In previous trials by fire, outsiders were not permitted to see these things, but this time was different. Not only were the prizes astonishing, but for the first time, everyone was able to catch a glimpse of the Ruins of Immortality.

Although it was only a tiny portion, it was still enough to capture the attention of innumerable cultivators.

When they saw the gigantic corpse, cries of shock echoed out in all directions. Then the ancient Dao Tree appeared, and even greater shouts of astonishment could be heard.

“It’s actually... growing on the top of the giant’s corpse!”

“That’s the ancient Dao Tree? What exactly is it? Why is it called a Dao Tree?!”

“That corpse... Heavens! I never imagined that things that huge existed! How is this possible?! If that thing wasn’t dead... who could possibly fight it? It’s... actually a real corpse!”

The faces of the Patriarchs up in the starry sky palace were calm; all of them were familiar with the Ruins of Immortality.

However, they were all wondering what motive the Three Great Daoist Societies had to allow all the crowds on the outside to see.

A huge corpse. An ancient tree.

“The tree leaves are the arenas,” said Ling Yunzi. “The leaves on the left

side will be the Nascent Soul battleground. The leaves on the right are for Spirit Severing. As for the central main trunk... that is where the Dao Seeking fights will take place!" As his words echoed out, Meng Hao stood there on one of the leaves on the main trunk, at the bottom level.

All of the other Dao Seeking cultivators were also located on bottom-level leaves. When they looked up, they could see that the branches sticking out from it were arranged in layers, the highest of which was ten levels away.

The higher the level, the fewer the leaves. In fact, at the apex, there was only one golden leaf, which was completely eye catching.

As for the battlegrounds on the left and right, they were also arranged in levels, although instead of climbing straight up, they moved out to the side. Similarly, though, as they reached their ends, the leaves grew sparser, until at the very end of each, was a golden leaf!

Three golden leaves. Those were the limits of the ancient Dao Tree, and the locations where the final matches would be fought.

Even as Ling Yunzi provided his explanation, he and the other two old men performed incantation gestures and produced magical materials which they used to begin to set up teleportation portals on the giant's corpse beneath the tree.

After the teleportation portals took shape, the three old men performed incantation gestures and pointed out, causing boundless light to shine up. Out in the sects of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, as soon as the light from the teleportation portals rose up, Zhao Yifan, Taiyang Zi, Fan Dong'er, and other Chosen all stepped forward onto the teleportation portals at their locations. Light flashed, and they vanished.

When they reappeared, they were standing atop the giant's corpse in the Ruins of Immortality.

It only took the space of about ten breaths of time for roughly a hundred people from all the sects to arrive. Then, cracking sounds could be heard as the teleportation portals shattered and faded away.

As Fan Dong'er and the others spread out, they looked around with trembling minds. This was apparently their first time coming to this place as well.

From the leaf he stood upon, Meng Hao could see Fan Dong'er, Taiyang Zi, even Sun Hai and others. His eyes flickered and a smile appeared on his face.

Ling Yunzi waved his sleeve, causing the nearly one hundred Chosen to fly out toward tree leaves according to the level of their cultivation base.

Soon, Fan Dong'er and the others were standing on leaves on the lowest level of the tree. As for Fan Dong'er, she wore a white robe, and behind her swirled a globe of white mist. It was very thick, making it impossible to see exactly what was inside.

The leaf she stood upon wasn't very far away from Meng Hao, and he couldn't help but glance over at her. His eye was especially caught by the white mist behind her.

Fan Dong'er noticed him looking at her, and frowned. However, she knew the two of them would soon be fellow disciples of the same sect, so she suppressed her anger and merely glared at him.

Meng Hao quickly looked away, focusing his attention on Zhao Yifan, then Li Ling'er. When he looked at Li Ling'er, he subconsciously... checked out her rear end.

He could still remember how he had spanked her two times, leaving her buttocks uneven.

Li Ling'er glanced at him coolly, then ignored him completely. Feeling somewhat pleased, Meng Hao then looked around until he noticed one particular young man who happened to be looking at him.

When their gazes met, the young man trembled. He was... naturally, Sun Hai.

Sun Hai didn't recognize Meng Hao, but for some reason, when Meng Hao looked at him, it caused him to gasp and be filled with a cold, unsettling feeling.

At first, Meng Hao didn't recognize who the bald-headed youth was. But after a moment, his jaw almost dropped.

"What happened to all his hair?" he thought. "I seem to remember leaving quite a bit behind." It wasn't just Meng Hao who was sizing up these Chosen. Many of the other competitors in the trial by fire were examining them closely.

Not much more time passed before Ling Yunzi's voice was heard once again.

"The arena matches of the Nascent Soul, Spirit Severing, and Dao Seeking, will be completely separate from each other, and shall progress separately. The ancient Dao Tree leaves upon which you stand contain a teleportation function. Not only will it teleport two people onto one leaf to fight, but it will also teleport the winner to the next level!"

"The matches will proceed in this fashion all the way until the final battle.

"In the arena matches, life and death are determined by fate. Defeat will result in elimination from the competition. If you utter the words 'I concede,' then you will also be removed from the competition.

"Bear in mind that we are in the Ruins of Immortality, and danger lurks everywhere! Even if some strange things appear on the outside, things which attempt to distract you, or lure you out, you must under no circumstances leave the tree leaves.

"On the tree leaves, you are safe. If you leave them, though... it is impossible to say whether you will make it back alive.

"And now, let the arena matches begin!"

Almost in the same instant that the words left Ling Yunzi's mouth, Meng Hao suddenly cried out loudly.

"Patriarch, wait a moment!"

His voice echoed out, attracting quite a bit of attention from those around him. Ling Yunzi frowned and looked over at Meng Hao. At first he

was tempted to ignore him, but after thinking about the expression on Meng Hao's face when he held the Feng Shui compass aloft, his heart softened.

"Yes, what is it?"

"Patriarch, I wanted to know, the enormous corpse down there, is it a cultivator?" Actually, Meng Hao wasn't the only person who wanted to know the answer to that question. All of the competitors were wondering the same thing. As for the newly arrived Chosen, they remained silent; they had already asked about the subject when they were in the outside world.

Ling Yunzi remained silent for a moment. He didn't actually have the sole authority to answer such a question. He looked over at the other two men, and all of them exchanged glances. Then, they produced jade slips which they used to communicate with their sect headquarters, inquiring as to whether they were permitted to respond.

After a moment, Ling Yunzi put his jade slip away and looked back up at Meng Hao.

"This is a God of the Pāramitā!"

After uttering those words, Ling Yunzi didn't wait for anyone's reaction. He immediately called out again, "Let the arena matches begin!"

Meng Hao's mind trembled, and he couldn't keep himself from taking in a deep breath in response to the answer he had just received. A God....

Actually, all of the trial by fire participants were mentally shaken. However, even as this happened, the world in front of them distorted, and they began to grow blurry. In the blink of an eye, everyone grew clear again, and they were on the next level of leaves.

However instead of being alone on the leaves, each person was now facing an opponent.

Meng Hao found himself looking at a young man who had originally been bursting with power. However, as soon as things grew clear and he saw that he was facing Meng Hao, his face fell.

He was not one of the Chosen from the outside sects, but rather one of the competitors from the trial by fire. Furthermore... he had been on the same altar as the middle-aged man upon whom Meng Hao had vented his anger earlier. He had personally witnessed the entire incident.

Although he felt torn inwardly, his eyes quickly filled with a fierce light. He let out a powerful roar and employed the full power of his cultivation base as he turned into a prismatic beam of light that shot toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's face was calm as the young man closed in. He raised his right hand and punched out into the air, then spun and began to walk toward the edge of the arena.

Almost in the same moment that he turned, a huge boom could be heard, and blood sprayed from the young man's mouth. Although he had been approaching like a shooting star, in that instant, his light went dim, and he was forced back more than thirty meters, where he coughed up another mouthful of blood. His expression was now dismal, and his face ashen.

He was well aware that Meng Hao had been holding back. The blow just now had been directed at the air in front of him, and had it actually landed on his body, he would not have gotten off as easily as being forced back a bit and only slightly injured.

He took a deep breath, then looked sadly at Meng Hao, clasped hands, and bowed deeply.

"I concede," he said, sounding a bit bitter.

As soon as the words left his mouth, he faded away, returning to the first level of leaves, which indicated that he had been eliminated. As for Meng Hao, he sat down cross-legged at the edge of the arena and looked around at the other matches that were taking place.

He was feeling quite pleased with himself, but as for the cultivators from the Ninth Mountain and Sea watching the arena matches, they were completely shaken by Meng Hao's power.

“One punch... into the air! And he actually injured a peak Dao Seeking cultivator!”

“This Fang Mu hasn’t even used any magical techniques! He’s just relying on the strength of his fleshly body!”

“No wonder he could stand up to the pressure outside those altars! Such fleshly body strength is extremely rare!”

The first round of the arena matches was a simple thing for Zhao Yifan, as well as the other Chosen. None of them needed more than ten breaths of time to secure victory.

Meng Hao looked around at the other arena locations and identified about ten other people besides the Chosen who were worth paying attention to. Among those, one was the masked young man Li Yan. Another was the cultivator with the mosquitos, and a third was a young boy who was also one of the trial by fire competitors. Although he never spoke, he had made it into the group of one thousand Dao Seeking competitors, and had his own unique capabilities.

In the first round, he attacked viciously, the result being that his opponent was instantly reduced to a bloody pulp.

The fourth person was a garrulous old man who constantly shivered and muttered to himself. His first opponent was a Chosen from the Seven Seas Sect. Strangely, as soon as he appeared in front of the mumbling old man, the Chosen suddenly seemed to go crazy and tried to charge outside of the leaf arena. Were it not for Ling Yunzi immediately intervening to save him, he would have been in great danger.

Of those four people, the one who caused Meng Hao the greatest consternation was not the garrulous old man or Li Yan, but rather, that unprepossessing young boy!

“He has at least thirty percent of the power of a true Immortal!” thought Meng Hao, looking at him closely. Almost in the exact instant that Meng Hao looked at him, the boy turned his head to return the gaze. Their eyes locked over all the various arenas between them, and the boy’s mouth twisted into a vicious smile.

# Chapter 867: One Punch! [1]

Other than those four, there were six Chosen who Meng Hao hadn't seen on Planet South Heaven when all the outside Chosen came. Four were men and two were women. One of the women wore a white mask and a long red robe. When she attacked, a Blood Orchid bloomed around her, indicating that she came from the Church of the Blood Orchid.

The other woman wore garments of five colors, and was not very pretty. She attacked with shocking five elements magic, and even though Meng Hao had previously cultivated a five elements Nascent Soul, he had the feeling that this woman's skill with the five elements exceeded his own. She was from the Five Colors Sect.

The other four cultivators were all young men. One of them did not personally attack his opponent, but rather, caused a coffin to appear, from within which emerged a corpse. The corpse easily slaughtered the young man's opponent. He was from one of the Five Great Holy Lands, the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum.

The second young man was bony, with eyes that burned like fire. Like the other young man, he did not personally attack, but instead, simply stared at his opponent, who then burst into flames and then transformed into nothing but ash.

The third young man was handsome and, shockingly, had a third eye on his forehead. It was clearly a Dharma Eye, and it remained closed the entire time. The young man wore a slight smile, and he seemed almost completely harmless, as if he lacked any ability to attack whatsoever. Furthermore, his opponent didn't attack either! The two of them transmitted a few words to each other, and then the opponent knelt down on one knee, looking at the young man with a pious expression, and conceded.

This young man was from the Burning Incense Stick Society.

The last person was a hulking man from the Kunlun Society. He was stalwart, with a powerful fleshly body. He started his match standing there

like a mountain. When his opponent attacked, he waved a finger, causing a huge mountain to descend, smashing into his opponent and instantly defeating him. However, he did not kill his opponent.

When Meng Hao saw that, his eyes suddenly shone with the desire to do battle.

As the intense fighting of the first round of arena matches played out, the audiences outside in the Ninth Mountain and Sea closely watched the screens in the three vortexes. Each of those screens was divided into multiple smaller screens which depicted each of the battlegrounds.

In the palace in the starry sky, the various Patriarchs were closely observing to the goings on, and were paying especially close attention to the Chosen from their own sects. They were also watching the cultivators from the other sects. Although most of the Chosen were not particularly powerful, they were the future blazing suns of the various sects.

As long as they did not unexpectedly perish and could mature and grow stronger, they would eventually allow their sects to gain more power and influence.

“This generation has come across the fate of becoming a true immortal; in the Nine Mountains and Seas, every 10,000 years, the true immortality destiny descends, and an entire generation of Chosen always comes out of the woodwork.”

“I wonder which three will last until the end to take first place in their stage!?”

Everyone was watching the fighting, hearts filled with anticipation.

Back in the battleground, Meng Hao’s expression was calm as he sat there cross-legged on the leaf. He looked around at the other arenas, and could see many people looking back at him.

After looking around for a while, Meng Hao had the mind to take a look at the Nascent Soul battles, but unfortunately, it was currently impossible to see the fighting taking place in the other two areas. Finally, he closed his eyes and waited for time to pass.

On the Nascent Soul battleground, Chen Fan's expression was as gloomy as ever. His attacks appeared to be normal, but his opponent seemed to have been infected by his mood, and as such, was only able to fight with half of the power of his cultivation base.

On the Spirit Severing battleground, the fighting was equally intense.

The first round of arena matches for the Dao Seeking stage was the first to end, after a total of four hours. Half of the competitors were eliminated, and the other half stood on their leaves on the second level, eyes flickering. The leaves beneath their feet began to shine with light that spread out to cover everyone and teleport them to the third layer of leaves.

When he reappeared amidst the flickering light, Meng Hao was facing an old man whose face was covered with dark blotches. Immediately, a murderous aura sprang up, along with shocking energy. The man held a cane in his hand, and as he walked forward, he suddenly realized he was facing Meng Hao, and his pupils constricted.

"Fang Mu!" he thought, and his heart began to pound with unease. He had never imagined that he would end up facing the mighty Fang Mu in the second round. "His fleshly body is incredibly powerful, and his divine sense is incredible. He has a profound cultivation base and attacks without mercy.... Dammit, why did I have to end up facing him? Although, I might not necessarily be unable to earn a victory. I excel in terms of speed!"

Eyes flickering, the old man turned into a blur as, all of a sudden, nine clones appeared.

The nine clones closed in on Meng Hao, each one coming from a different direction.

Meng Hao stood there, looking around coldly at the incoming figures. His expression was calm as he raised his right hand and once again released one punch. As soon as the punch landed on the ground, he turned and, just as he had in the last battle, began to walk to the edge of the arena.

Behind him, massive booms rang out. His one punch caused a huge

vortex to appear, which emanated a shocking gravitational force and intense rumbling. Ten figures immediately began to be sucked in toward the vortex. Nine of them collapsed into pieces, and the old man's true self coughed up blood. His expression was one of astonishment as he quickly called out that he conceded.

As soon as the words left his mouth, he faded away to reappear back on the first level of leaves. He had been completely defeated.

By that point, Meng Hao had reached the edge of the arena, where he sat down cross-legged and closed his eyes.

Many people in the outside world were paying attention to Meng Hao, and what they saw shocked them.

“One punch again!! It was exactly the same as the first round, except that the old man’s cultivation base was clearly much higher than the guy from the previous fight!”

“This Fang Mu’s fleshly body is so powerful that he can create a vacuum! Maybe his speed truly isn’t that great, but he’s so strong that he doesn’t even need speed! Who could possibly fight back against that one punch!”

“He’s definitely going to get into the top 16. I can’t wait to see him fight against some of those Chosen!!”

The outside world was in an uproar. It didn’t take long for the second round of arena matches to end, and the third to begin. Meng Hao appeared on the next level of leaves, where he looked at the glittering lights in front of him and watched his opponent emerge.

This person was no Chosen. Instead, it was the young man with the mosquitos. When he laid eyes on Meng Hao, instead of looking nervous like the previous two opponents, his eyes gleamed with the desire to do battle.

“Fang Mu,” he said. “It’s my pleasure to be able to fight with you. Finally, I’ll be able to see exactly how powerful you are!”

Meng Hao’s expression was the same as ever; completely emotionless. What he had been paying attention to this whole time was not the young

man himself, but rather his mosquitos.

Before the young man even finished speaking, he waved his hand, causing a shocking cloud of fierce mosquitos to appear. The largest were a meter long, and many were the size of a fist. They spread out in a great cloud as they shot toward Meng Hao.

A buzzing sound could be heard as they closed in. Meng Hao's eyes flickered as he clenched his fist and then punched out.

Just like the previous matches, it was only one punch. Rumbling filled the air and ripples spread out in all directions. At the same time, Meng Hao turned and walked toward the edge of the arena.

Behind him, the shocking ripples slammed into the mosquitoes, causing them to collapse into pieces. The young man's body began to vibrate uncontrollably as he shot backward. Blood sprayed from his mouth, and his expression was one of shock. He hadn't even been able to attack, and yet his cultivation base was suppressed, and he almost felt as if his vital organs were being tossed about.

At the critical moment, even the young man's voice quavered as he cried out, "Concede... I concede!!"

He looked over at Meng Hao with an unprecedented expression of fear. He had been aware that Meng Hao was powerful, but had never imagined that he was THIS powerful!

As the scene played out in front of the eyes of the audience in the outside world, it sent them into tumult. In the first round, one punch. In the second round, also one punch. In the third round, facing up against a powerful opponent, and... also one punch!

"Just... just how powerful is he?!?!"

"He definitely deserves to take first place! With power and confidence like that, he's basically invincible!"

"I'm guessing that only the Chosen from the great sects can actually fight him!!"

"I wonder who will force him into using two punches!?"

Up in the starry sky palace, the various Patriarchs were nodding in approval. None of them had any reason to deny that among his generation, Meng Hao truly was incredibly powerful!

"He must be using a vibration magic. This Fang Mu isn't very old, but he's actually mastered the magic of vibration!" 2

"That's a fleshly body technique that can only be learned when the fleshly body has reached a certain level of power. It can be considered very strong within the Spirit Realm. In fact, even in the Immortal Realm, there are only a handful of people who have mastered it!"

Meng Hao's performance was flashy and eye-catching, making him the center of attention of everyone watching the arena matches. When it came to the Chosen who were participating in the arena matches, they were also paying close attention to Meng Hao. Although their matches ended quickly, none of them were able to finish them with the ease that Meng Hao did.

"Hmph, he's just gotten lucky. How could he have run into so many weak opponents?! If he had faced off against formidable adversaries like we did, there's no way he would've gotten off so easy!"

"The further along we get, the more powerful the opponents will be. Let's see exactly how many rounds he can last!"

Discussions like these could be heard as the third round of matches concluded, and the fourth round began. By now, most of the cultivators had been eliminated, and only about a hundred remained.

Each and every one... was incredibly powerful!

Meng Hao stood on the fifth level of leaves as another opponent appeared amidst glittering lights. It was a hulking man who wore a long robe. Ripples spread out as he materialized. This was not the powerful expert from the Kunlun Society, but was a Chosen nonetheless.

He came from the Seven Seas Sect.

In each of the previous rounds, he had torn his opponent to shreds. All of them had died. When walked out into the arena, a cruel smile could be seen on his face, and his eyes shone with a vicious gleam.

“Fang Mu...” he said. “We meet at last. You made quite a show in the past few rounds, but that was only because the people you were up against were weaklings!

“This time, I’ll help you to understand how wide the gap is between a rogue cultivator like you and us Chosen. That gap... will leave you in despair!” The man laughed uproariously, and put on the appearance of being crude and rash. In truth, he was actually being very cautious, and was careful not to let any of his scheming thoughts show on the surface. As he spoke, he began to charge forward, and illusory seawater appeared around him. Seven seas appeared, causing rumbling sounds to fill the air. Simultaneously, a huge sea dragon materialized and roared toward Meng Hao.

As of this moment, many people among the audiences outside in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were watching Meng Hao in the arena. When they saw the Chosen from the Seven Seas Sect attacking Meng Hao, many of them sighed.

“Fang Mu will definitely be incapable of pulling off something amazing with a single punch like before.”

“Hmph. Going up against weaklings makes it easy to seem powerful. But now that he’s fighting a Chosen, he’ll have a tough time remaining calm. Even if he wins, this battle is definitely going to be like a fierce struggle between a tiger and a dragon.”

“I’ve heard that the Seven Seas Sect’s Yun Tianhe has a bizarre energy. After combining that energy with the cultivation base, it creates a power that enables him to fight a false Immortal without being at a disadvantage.”

The discussions in the outside world could not be heard in the arenas. At the same time, the hulking man from the Seven Seas Sect let out a powerful roar as he closed in on Meng Hao. Meng Hao’s expression was as

calm as ever as, just the same as before, he punched one time!

\*

1. Since I'm sure there will be some comments, I'll explain about the "one punch" thing. The two characters which make up this chapter name (一拳) literally mean "one fist." However, often this character of "fist" is used to describe the action of punching. A cursory search reveals that there seem to be two common Chinese translations of "One-Punch Man." One translation (一击男) comes across as "one strike man," the other (一拳超人) "one punch super man" or "one fist super man," uses the same two characters as the title of this chapter. One-Punch Man apparently rose to popularity in Japan starting around 2012, but the officially licensed Chinese translations didn't come out until late 2015, whereas this chapter was originally published in early 2015. I'll leave it up to you to decide if this is an intentional reference to Saitama. Although isn't it interesting that a bald character suddenly showed up in the last chapter...
2. Meng Hao picked up the "vibration magic" from Guyiding Tri-rain in chapter 644. He used it afterwards on a couple occasions.

# Chapter 868: Junior Blood Immortal!

“Looking to die!?” said the hulking man with a malicious grin. He was clearly not pleased with Meng Hao’s plan to end the fight with one punch. Sneering inwardly, he redoubled the power he was putting into his attack, and also unleashed a forbidden technique of his sect, which further increased its power by thirty percent.

He didn’t just want to win, he wanted to kill his opponent, and he seemed very excited at the prospect of ending the life of the first place competitor who was also a future Conclave disciple of the Ninth Sea God World.

Killing someone in an arena match was nothing anyone could complain about, so there was little danger of repercussions. His sect would reward him, and even more importantly, protect him.

What he saw was a chance to make great advancement with little effort, right there in front of him.

“DIE!” he roared, his eyes bursting with a murderous look as he caused the Seven Seas Dragon to suddenly grow another vicious head, which also snapped toward Meng Hao.

It was at this point that Meng Hao’s fist connected with the dragon.

It was only one punch, but that punch slammed into the dragon with an enormous boom. A violent tremor ran through it, and then its first head cracked and exploded. The second head also exploded, and then, bit by bit, its body.

The seven seas rumbled briefly and then collapsed, vanishing in the blink of an eye, as if they had never been there to begin with. At this point, Meng Hao’s fist slammed into the hulking man’s chest.

The big man’s eyes went wide as he looked at Meng Hao, and his face twisted. Meng Hao’s expression was calm as he pulled his hand back and walked off to the edge of the arena.

In the instant he turned, blood sprayed from the hulking man’s mouth.

Fissures spread out from the point of impact on his chest, and in the blink of an eye, they had covered his entire body. A look of disbelief could be seen on his face, and he opened his mouth to say something. Before any words could come out, though, he exploded.

As the haze of blood and gore blasted out, Meng Hao reached the edge of the arena and sat down cross-legged. The entire time, only one, placid expression could be seen on his face. He reached up to wipe a drop of blood off of his cheek, then closed his eyes.

Gasps could be heard from the audiences outside in the Ninth Mountain and Sea as they watched Meng Hao in terrified shock.

“That was still... just one punch!!”

“Heavens! Just exactly how powerful is this Fang Mu!? That Chosen from the Seven Seas Sect could match up to a false Immortal, and yet he collapsed from a single punch! Fang Mu hasn’t even punched two times yet.”

“Four matches, and he only punched one time each! Fang Mu is way too powerful!!”

“He’s already in the top 100, with only four punches!!”

Even the eyes of the Patriarchs in the starry sky palace went wide.

Meng Hao was the focus of the attention of all the Chosen from the various sects, and was now viewed by most of them as a major adversary. Even Zhao Yifan was wondering whether or not he could beat the Seven Seas Sect’s Chosen with only one punch. Of course, if he used a sword, he was confident he could.

Rumbling booms continued to echo out as the fourth round of arena matches proceeded. There was another battle that was particularly eye-catching. In fact, after Meng Hao’s match ended, most eyes among the audiences in the Ninth Mountain and Sea turned to watch it.

That battle was the match being fought by a disciple from the Holy Land of Mount Sun, the illustrious Taiyang Zi!

His body was surrounded by boundless light, making him look almost like a sun. His opponent was a boy, the same competitor Meng Hao had noticed earlier, and had been paying special attention to.

From what Meng Hao could tell, he possessed at least thirty percent of the power of a true Immortal.

When the battle started, most of the spectators were confident that Taiyang Zi would come out victorious. And yet, contrary to all speculations, he actually lost!

Furthermore, it was an incredible defeat. If he hadn't uttered the words 'I concede,' then he would almost certainly have died. The boy's magic caused a bloody glow to emanate out, and it seemed incredibly bloodthirsty. The sight of it caused quite a stir among the crowds, and many of the cultivators participating in the arena matches were shocked.

"Junior Blood Immortal! That was one of the names that came up in the trial by fire!"

"He actually defeated Taiyang Zi!"

"He's making his rise to the top!!"

While the outside audiences were discussing the matter, Meng Hao looked over at the boy to find him looking back with killing intent flickering in his eyes.

Two hours later, the fourth round of matches ended. There were now only a bit over sixty people left in the competition. The next round... would determine the top 32!

From more than a thousand people, 32 would move on! One could imagine that even if there were a weak person among that number who had happened to overcome more powerful people by chance, then that luck could be considered an aspect of their power.

"The top 32 are about to be determined!"

"Even some of the top Chosen from the great sects were defeated in the previous fights. I wonder who will make it to the top 32!"

While the outside audiences buzzed, Ling Yunzi stood below the ancient Dao Tree and glanced over the more than sixty competitors who remained.

"In the Dao Seeking arena matches," he announced, "the most powerful people will form the top 32. Unfortunately, you have three too many people to make all the matches even. Therefore, some of you will be fighting more than one battle to make it into the top 32. As for who those people are, only the Heavens know. It will all be up to the Dao Tree's teleportation."

"You will have four hours to rest, after which the battles to determine the top 32 will begin!"

During those four hours, Meng Hao sat there cross-legged, meditating. He could sense that there were many people watching him, but he didn't open his eyes. Considering the level of his cultivation base, he was clearly at the pinnacle of the competitors in the arena matches. Were it not for the Immortal jades and the precious treasures, he would never have participated.

However, now that he was here, there were a few people who had attracted his interest. Unfortunately, he had yet to face them as opponents.

Four hours later, glittering light covered the leaves of the Dao Tree, teleporting Meng Hao and all the remaining contestants up to the next level of leaves. From within the glittering light in front of Meng Hao, a young woman stepped out.

She wore a blood-colored robe, and a white mask. This was the Chosen from the Church of the Blood Orchid, and as soon as she caught sight of Meng Hao, she stopped in her tracks. However, it took only a moment for her to emanate a powerful will to fight.

The intensity of that will caused Meng Hao's eyes to shine with a fierce glow.

"Fellow Daoist Fang," she said, her words echoing out coldly from behind her mask, "please give me some fighting tips!" Even as she spoke,

she performed an incantation gesture with her right hand, causing a Blood Orchid to appear in front of her. As the flower swayed back and forth, it began to grow rapidly. Rumbling sounds could be heard as, in the blink of an eye, it grew to a size of thirty meters.

It had a thick trunk, blood-colored petals, and looked both extremely imposing and visually stunning. At the same time, the flower twitched, causing branches to shoot toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao stepped forward, clenched his fist, and sent out a single punch.

As of this moment, everyone in the outside world was watching as the punch caused a huge vortex to appear. Rumbling sounds spread out, causing the air to vibrate, and everything else to shake violently.

The incoming Blood Orchid branches twisted and then completely collapsed. However, in that moment, the Blood Orchid's petals of the spread wide as it bloomed. A drop of blood emerged that flew back to land on the forehead of the young woman's mask. Radiating an intense aura, the young woman then flickered as she shot toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao stood in place, neither retreating nor advancing. However, at the same time, he punched a second time.

This second punch caused the air to ripple, and a massive force to explode out and sweep across the young woman. Her body trembled, and she was about to unleash a divine ability when an intense pressure crushed down onto her cultivation base. In the blink of an eye, she completely lost any ability to rotate her cultivation base, which left her not only completely surprised, but also incapable of avoiding the punch that slammed into her.

A boom could be heard. Beneath the mask, blood spurted from the young woman's mouth, and she staggered backward a full thirty meters, after which she looked up at Meng Hao, panting.

"You're no match for me," Meng Hao said coolly.

The young woman was silent for a moment, after which she chuckled

bitterly and nodded.

"I concede," she said, and then vanished. When she reappeared, she was back on the first layer of leaves.

Meng Hao had won once again, but before the audiences outside could comment, light began to glitter on the tree leaf again, and... another person emerged!

It was a boy, none other than the same boy who had just defeated Taiyang Zi. Junior Blood Immortal!

His appearance on the scene instantly sent the audience into tumult.

"Fang Mu is one of the people who has to fight twice!!"

"There were three extra people in the competition, so some people have to fight more than once to get into the top 32. I never thought that Fang Mu would be one of them!"

"This is going to be one intense battle! Fang Mu versus Junior Blood Immortal! I wonder who will be strongest?!?!"

Junior Blood Immortal emerged slowly, and when he saw Meng Hao, his mouth twisted into a vicious grin. Killing intent flickered in his eyes.

"So, we meet at last!" he said in a raspy voice, licking his lips. A shocking red glow could be seen in his eyes as he stared at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao looked the boy over. He knew that he attacked with bizarre ferocity, and had reduced all of his opponents to pools of putrid blood, with the exception of Taiyang Zi.

Contrary to what one might expect, the boy had not made much of an impression during the ten stages of the trial by fire. He had achieved just enough to make it into the top 1,000. Clearly, he had been holding back in virtually all aspects.

Meng Hao's expression was calm, and he said nothing. He merely looked indifferently at the boy.

When their gazes met, roaring sounds filled both of their minds as their divine senses made contact with each other. The boy's eyes filled with

surprise. He knew his opponent was powerful, and yet, still remained fully confident in himself. Taking advantage of the rumbling caused by the divine sense, he charged toward Meng Hao, raising his right hand to perform an incantation gesture. Bloody light flickered up, and in the blink of an eye, a blood-colored bottle gourd appeared, rotating as it sped through the air toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he took a step forward. In that instant, the entire arena match leaf began to quake, and a wind began to swirl around Meng Hao.

"This divine ability of mine will cause all of the blood in your body to boil and turn into a putrid sludge!" The Junior Blood Immortal's voice was now shrill as he called out. In the blink of an eye, the blood-colored bottle gourd began to exert an incredible gravitational force, as if it wanted to suck Meng Hao inside of it.

Meng Hao snorted coldly. He did not level any punches; this Junior Blood Immortal had a bizarre cultivation base, and Meng Hao would not take him lightly. The wind swirling around him quickly transformed into a violent tempest that shot forward. At the same time, his body transformed into a black vulture, which flapped its wings, charging through the gravitational force to appear directly in front of the boy, where it slashed out with claws vicious enough to shatter stone and metal.

# Chapter 869: Top 32!

The boy's expression flickered, and blue veins popped out on his forehead as he howled at the incoming vulture. Sound waves rippled out that seemed to wish to shatter the air. The boy's expression was vicious as he raised both hands up, causing a sea of blood to appear and surge out toward Meng Hao.

Booms rang out as the two of them fought back and forth in midair. At one point, the boy let out a shrill cry, causing the sea of blood to turn into a blood-colored vortex that tried to suck Meng Hao in.

Meng Hao waved his hand, causing numerous mountains to appear, which then linked together to form a mountain range. However, thanks to the black feather, that mountain range actually looked like a huge river, which then surged in counterattack against the blood-colored vortex. The vortex was crushed as easily as dried twigs, shattering into pieces as vulture-form Meng Hao once again slashed through the air, his claws extended toward the boy's torso.

Boom!

Blood sprayed from the boy's mouth as a huge hole was ripped into his chest. He immediately shot backward in retreat, biting the tip of his tongue and spitting out some blood, which twisted in the air to become ten blood drops. Each drop immediately began to expand, turning into ten seas of blood that spread out to cover everything.

"Ten Seas, Blood Slaughter!" roared the boy. Meng Hao's face was calm, and he didn't retreat. Instead, he advanced, an aura of invincibility exploding out of him. As he faced the ten seas of blood, he clenched his hand into a fist and punched out into the air. Then, he punched again.

Two mere punches did not seem capable of fighting back against the ten roaring seas of blood. However, the boy's face flickered as he realized that something didn't seem quite right about the two blows, although he wasn't sure what.

In the blink of an eye, and before he had any time to react, Meng Hao

attacked a total of nine times. He didn't even seem to be paying attention to the seas of blood that surrounded him, but instead, was punching directly forward.

Nine punches, each one more shocking than the one before.

This was... a Daoist magic! Nine Heavens Destruction! 1

As soon as the ninth punch exploded out, the boy's face fell. His pupils constricted as he retreated at top speed. At the same time, a massive boom echoed out, so powerful that cultivators in the surrounding arena matches heard it and were shocked.

A gigantic vortex surged out as a result of the nine punches. The blood seas were completely incapable of doing anything except be sucked up by the vortex. As for Meng Hao, he stood next to the vortex, his expression cold as he watched the boy fleeing. Then he raised his hand and stretched it out in a grasping motion.

Star Plucking Magic!

BOOM!

Blood sprayed from the boy's mouth. An expression of astonishment covered his face as he was dragged back toward Meng Hao, his body completely beyond his own control. In the blink of an eye, he was directly in front of Meng Hao, and was close enough that he could even see the cold look in Meng Hao's eyes.

"You're looking to die!" howled the boy, his eyes bright red. Suddenly, his skin turned crimson, and black mist began to float up from the top of his head. Shockingly, an enormous image began to form above him.

It was a gigantic leech, covered with scales, that emanated an intense pressure. As soon as the cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea saw it, their faces flickered with shock.

"Blood Leech Grand Magic!!"

"That's a forbidden magic! That boy's actually using a forbidden magic!"

In the starry sky palace, the various Patriarchs were looking on with

strange gleams in their eyes.

"That boy has remained undercover this entire time. Considering he cultivates a vicious magic like that, it's little wonder he could defeat Taiyang Zi!"

"However, Saint Blood Leech was exterminated years ago by the Three Great Daoist Societies. Even if some of his Divine Clones survived, they wouldn't be able to do this alone! It seems this boy must have gotten his hands on one of them. Although it's only the first form of the Blood Leech Grand Magic, Fang Mu is still in grave danger."

"According to legend, the only thing that can restrain this magic is the Dao of the Blood Demon. Either that, or an incredibly powerful cultivation base."

Back in the arena, a vicious expression could be seen on the boy's face. This was his trump card, which he had intended to save for someone in the top 4. However, he was now forced into a corner, and had no other choice. His desire to kill Meng Hao now grew even stronger.

"Killing you won't be a waste of my grand magic," said the boy with a hideous grin. "Considering your reputation, slaying you will make me famous!" The enormous illusory Blood Leech opened its mouth, revealing countless sharp teeth as it pounced toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao frowned slightly. This leech left him feeling as if his blood were unstable, and that it would burst out from inside of him at any moment. He snorted coldly, and rumbling filled the air as his Dharma Idol appeared behind him.

Because of the transformative powers of the black feather, the Dharma Idol now looked exactly like Fang Mu. It was three hundred meters tall, and emanated boundless magical light. As soon as it appeared, it stepped forward and punched toward the enormous leech.

A boom could be heard, and the boy's face fell. Blood spurted out all over his body as he tumbled backward. The enormous illusory leech trembled, seemingly on the verge of collapsing to pieces.

“I refuse to back down! Fang Mu, DIE!!” The boy howled as countless rips and tears appeared all over his body. At the same time, the image of the leech shattered, transforming into innumerable fragments that shot toward the boy and fused into him. In the next moment, the boy suddenly exploded.

In that moment of explosion, the boy’s flesh and blood transformed into numerous blood-colored leeches, a vast cloud of nearly a thousand. Buzzing could be heard as they shot toward Meng Hao. In addition to the leeches, a bloody mist spread out in all directions, making it impossible for onlookers to see what was happening clearly.

This new development caused great shock among the onlookers in the outside world. Even the Patriarchs in the starry sky palace were surprised.

“The second form!”

“I can’t believe this boy has cultivated the Blood Leech Grand Magic all the way to the second form!”

Not even the Patriarchs in the starry sky palace could see what was happening inside the red mist. Were this some other location, nothing could block their divine sense. However, these were the Ruins of Immortality, so they could only watch with their eyes, not with their divine sense.

Even Ling Yunzi and the other two old men couldn’t do anything but watch. Their faces flickered as they considered the danger Meng Hao was in.

The outside world was in tumult.

“Don’t tell me Fang Mu is going to perish!”

What the people on the outside couldn’t see was that Meng Hao was standing in the middle of the bloody mist, his body glowing with red light as he stared coldly at the more than one thousand incoming Blood Leeches. The leeches were now trembling in terror.

The boy’s quivering divine sense emanated out from the leeches.

“Blood... Blood Demon Grand Magic? Spare me, Fellow Daoist Fang, spare me....”

Meng Hao ignored him. After sweeping his own divine sense across the leeches, he exercised a bit of will, and booms could be heard as one leech after another began to explode. All of them transformed into nothing more than drifting ash.

As the bloody mist faded away, Meng Hao walked calmly over to the edge of the arena and sat down cross-legged.

The outside world was in an uproar.

“That boy’s grand magic was actually defeated!”

“There were clearly more than a thousand leeches just a moment ago. Then that red mist covered everything over, and we couldn’t see anything. How exactly did Fang Mu secure victory!?”

“Junior Blood Immortal defeated Taiyang Zi, and then Fang Mu defeated Junior Blood Immortal! Fang Mu... is invincible!!”

The outside crowds were astonished, and the Patriarchs inside the palace were frowning. They were all looking at Meng Hao with thoughtful expressions.

They had been unable to see what had happened inside the red mist, but they knew that the second form of the Blood Leech Grand Magic was incredibly difficult to deal with. The fact that it had been defeated so quickly was quite puzzling to them.

As everyone pondered these matters, the old man from the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite spoke up.

“Perhaps the boy’s version of the second form wasn’t stable, and he accidentally self-destructed,” he said slowly, his voice echoing about.

This was the only answer that made sense. After all, the second form of the Blood Leech Grand Magic was very difficult to cultivate successfully.

Back in the arena, Meng Hao sat there calmly. His battle with the boy just now had caused quite a bit of shock amongst the other competitors,

especially the Chosen. The boy had just defeated Taiyang Zi, so the fact that Meng Hao had ended up killing him caused even more attention to be sent his way.

The Chosen had been quite shocked just to see the Blood Leech Grand Magic; what had played out after that left them filled with a sense of mystery.

Zhao Yifan's eyes flickered, and his desire to fight grew stronger as he looked over at Meng Hao. He said nothing, but the look flickering in his eyes grew even more intense.

Fan Dong'er frowned. On the one hand, she felt some mysterious and unexplainable loathing toward Meng Hao, but on the other hand, she had to admit that he was definitely on her level.

Li Ling'er and Sun Hai also looked over at him. Compared to Li Ling'er, Sun Hai's feelings were far more intense; to him, looking at Meng Hao kept causing him to think about his nightmarish experience on Planet South Heaven.

The other matches proceeded along. Now that Meng Hao's battle was over, there was another intense match that drew quite a bit of attention. That was the masked young man, Li Yan, who was fighting the emaciated youth from the Bones of the Flamedevil.

The youth attacked with a monstrous sea of flames, and fire burned within his eyes. As for Li Yan, the fighting had reached the point where he had finally removed his mask, revealing a scar-covered face, and eyes that brimmed with the desire to do battle. They fought with shocking attacks until Li Yan finally ran out of power. However, the Chosen from the Bones of the Flamedevil was also seriously injured.

Because of Li Yan's defeat, Meng Hao now had a much better idea of exactly how powerful he was.

The crowds in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were sighing.

"What a pity. It seems Li Yan isn't strong enough to make it into the top 32. However, this was a battle against Chen Hao from the Bones of the

Flamedevil, and he's incredible. Even though Li Yan lost, he still managed to seriously injure Chen Hao."

"You can only chalk it up to bad luck. At least he can feel proud in defeat!"

"I wonder how many competitors from the trial by fire will be left in the end. Will the first place spot for the stages of the Nascent Soul, Spirit Severing, and Dao Seeking belong to them, or to the Chosen?!"

In the palace among the stars, the Patriarchs were watching the various battles thoughtfully, but their expressions revealed nothing about what they were thinking.

In contrast, bets were already being placed in the outside world regarding who would make it into the top 8.

Soon, this round of matches was over. The extra three people were eliminated, along with half of the other participants, leaving 32 competitors behind!

These 32 were incredibly powerful cultivators!

\*

1. Meng Hao got the Nine Heavens Destruction in the Demon Immortal Pagoda in [chapter 585](#). He used it a few times after that, mostly when he was in the Milky Way Sea, and once when he went to the Black Sieve Sect after they took Xu Qing.

# Chapter 870: The Fiends Descend!

“Spend the next day in rest and recovery,” said Ling Yunzi. “After that, the top 16 will be selected!” Meng Hao and the others among the top 32 were now getting ever closer to the top of the main trunk of the ancient Dao Tree. Currently, they began to rest and prepare for the battles to get into the top 16.

By now, the battles to select the top 32 had already begun for the Nascent Soul and Spirit Severing stages. From Meng Hao’s position up above, he could finally see Chen Fan down in the Nascent Soul arena matches.

Although Chen Fan was currently fighting against a Nascent Soul cultivator like himself, the level of difficulty to get into the top 32 was extreme.

Nevertheless, he was still enduring. His sword strikes had gained an additional sharpness which, combined with his gloomy demeanor, caused shock to fill the heart of his opponent.

Chen Fan had long since drawn the notice of quite a few sects. His sword contained a Domain, even though he himself was only in the Nascent Soul stage. Someone like that was certain to make stunning accomplishments in the future.

One of the Three Churches and Six Sects, the Solitary Sword Pavilion, which was somewhat related to the Solitary Sword Sect, was especially interested in Chen Fan. They were actually the first to take note of him.

The day passed by quickly, and in the end, Chen Fan made it into the top 32.

As for Meng Hao, he began to fight for his spot in the top 16!

As the battle began, glittering light spread out, and they moved closer to the top of the tree. Meng Hao’s opponent was another Chosen!

It was the young woman from the Five Colors Sect, who wore robes that were a mixture of five colors. Meng Hao had been paying attention to her

in previous battles, and knew that she had astonishing skill in five elements magic.

This young woman was much more cautious than Meng Hao; once she saw who her opponent was, her heart began to thump. Of the handful of people she truly feared in the arena matches, Meng Hao was one of them.

After she and Meng Hao clasped hands to each other, the young woman took the initiative, performing a double-handed incantation, immediately unleashing metal, wood, water, fire and earth, all five elements. They materialized into a massive sea, a huge battleship, a blazing sun, and an enormous clay golem that wielded a golden greatsword, all of which shot toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's eyes gleamed with the light of anticipation. Body flickering, he waved his hand, causing a Violet Sea to descend, which was his water totem. Then the Golden Crow appeared, his metal totem. After that were his wood, fire, and earth totems. Shockingly, five elements fought against five elements.

The clash caused wild colors to flash about, and rumbling to fill the air. The audiences in the outside world were looking on with rapt attention.

In the arena, Meng Hao and the young woman fought back and forth in midair. Metal, wood, water, fire, and earth, the five elements, were unleashed amidst rumbling booms. In a short time, they had exchanged several dozen attacks, but throughout it all Meng Hao never went all out. Rather, he merely relied on the five elements as the avenue of attack while facing off against the woman.

He was using this fight to strengthen his five elements magic. Considering that the young woman was even more skilled than Meng Hao in the use of the five elements, this match gave those watching it the feeling that it was two disciples from the Five Colors Sect who were fighting.

In fact, the disciples from that very sect were somewhat confused, and watched in shock as the battle unfolded.

“Fang Mu actually excels in five elements magic as well!!”

"This is unbelievable! Although many people can use five elements magic to some degree, no one can compare to the Five Colors Sect. And yet, Fang Mu is actually evenly matched with Han Mei!"

There were sixteen arenas with thirty-two people fighting in them; no one had secured victory as of yet. It was at this point that a black wind rose up within the Ruins of Immortality. Not even the enormous corpse beneath the ancient Dao Tree could do anything to prevent its arrival. It swept out, appearing directly above the huge tree. Inside of the black wind, a pair of white eyes could be seen, which stared down at the crowds of people fighting down below.

The instant the black wind appeared, the faces of Ling Yunzi and the other two old men flickered. It wasn't just them; the crowds out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were also shocked.

Most nervous of all were the Patriarchs in the starry sky palace. They all rose to their feet, even the old men from the Three Great Daoist Societies, their eyes widening in response to the sudden appearance of the black wind.

"The ancient Dao Tree was personally planted by the Paragons, and contains a bit of the Paragons' will," said the Patriarch from the Ninth Sea God World. "They will be safe as long as they stay on the tree."

By now, all of the fighters on the Dao Tree had seen the Black Wind, and their faces flickered. Ling Yunzi and the other two old men took deep breaths, and then Ling Yunzi's voice rang out.

"You must not leave the leaves of the tree! As long as you remain on the leaves you will be in no danger!"

Almost in the same instant that Ling Yunzi's words could be heard, a scream rang out from off in the distance, a sound so piercing it seemed capable of shredding iron or rock. It echoed about, and to the people on the tree it merely gave them a twinge of pain in their ears, inflicting not even a minor hindrance to them. However, Ling Yunzi and the other two old men coughed up blood and, faces falling, quickly retreated as close as possible to the tree.

In that same moment, an enormous eyeball began to descend from up above. It was thoroughly bloodshot, and as it neared, the veins of blood within the eye began to extend themselves and whip around. Suddenly, a shrill voice echoed out.

“Who! Who plucked out my right eye!?!?

“My right eye! Get back here, come back....”

As the sound echoed about, the crowds on the Dao Tree coughed up blood. Thankfully, a bright glow spread out from the Dao Tree, ensuring that there were no deaths, only injuries.

The black wind and the eye merely milled about outside the Dao Tree, apparently in dread of it. However, after a moment, the black wind seemed to lose patience. A shrill shriek could be heard as an enormous, decomposing roc flew out from inside. It was shockingly large, and as it flew out, its sharp talons slashed out toward the Dao Tree.

Before it could get very close, brilliant light spread out from the Dao Tree, causing the roc to let out a miserable shriek and fall back. However, it did not leave. Instead, it continued to loiter outside of the Dao Tree, its eyes radiating an intense aura of death and savagery.

Considering that was all that happened, Meng Hao, although shocked, didn't pay very close attention to the matter. However, just when he was about to resume fighting with the young woman, another figure approached from off in the distance.

It was a man with half a head, his body surrounded by swirling black mist. He held a banner in his hand, and a sword had been plunged into his side. The grievous wound that had taken off half of his head did not appear to have been inflicted while alive, but rather as if some creature had bitten it off after he was already dead. Instead, the fatal blow that killed him was apparently delivered by the sword that was still stuck into his side.

He approached slowly, his one remaining eye sweeping over the crowds until it finally came to rest on Meng Hao. Then, he began to head directly toward him.

When Ling Yunzi and the others saw the man, their faces fell. Meng Hao's eyes flickered.

It was at this moment that the young woman from the Five Colors Sect suddenly performed an incantation gesture and attacked. Her five elements magic caused five-colored light to blaze up, transforming into a five-colored sealing mark that rotated rapidly as it shot through the air toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao frowned. He was no longer interested in fighting, so he punched out with his right hand, simultaneously causing his Dharma Idol to appear. Intense energy surged out, and a boom could be heard as the five-colored sealing mark shattered. The young woman's face fell, and blood spurted from her mouth.

It was in this moment that the half-headed man waved his right hand, causing the banner in his hand to unfurl. A black mist appeared, which transformed into a huge vortex. At the same time, he pointed toward Meng Hao.

"Come... come... come...." His voice was archaic, as if it had originated in ancient times. As the voice echoed out, an enormous gravitational force exploded out and enveloped the tree leaf Meng Hao was on. Meng Hao's face flickered, and he immediately dropped to the surface of the leaf. However, the face of the young woman from the Five Colors Sect fell as she was involuntarily swept up into the air. In the blink of an eye, she appeared to be on the verge of... flying completely away from the leaf.

Everyone looked on as it happened, but none of them were able to do anything to come to her aid. Ling Yunzi and the others stared with wide eyes, but could do nothing to help.

The crowds watching in the Ninth Mountain and Sea observed the scene with wide eyes, and many gasps could be heard.

In the starry sky palace, the Matriarch from the Five Colors Sect watched with an expression of unprecedented anxiety. The young woman participating in the arena matches was not a Chosen of the sect, but one of her direct bloodline descendants.

“Save me!” the girl cried in shrill alarm. She was now flying through the air toward the edge of the leaf, and was just about to be sucked outside. She could see the terrifying roc inside the black wind nearby, opening its decomposing mouth. She could also see the eyeball, with the countless veins stretching out from it.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered, and he suddenly extended his hand toward the girl and made a grabbing motion. The Star Plucking Magic was unleashed as he grabbed onto her and began to pull her back. However, the suction force was too strong, and all Meng Hao could do was slow her down a bit.

“Hurry up and concede!” he growled.

The young woman suddenly seemed to come to her senses, and urgently cried out, “I concede!!”

As soon as the two words left her mouth, and just as she was about to be sucked outside, glittering light surrounded her and she vanished. When she reappeared, she was back down on the first layer of leaves, badly shaken and her face ashen. She looked up toward Meng Hao with an expression of deep gratitude.

Meng Hao heaved a sigh of relief, then sat down cross-legged, looking out coldly at the half-headed man outside of the Dao Tree.

Everyone else who had been watching also sighed in relief. Ling Yunzi looked over at Meng Hao with even more admiration than before. Even he hadn’t thought of using the words ‘I concede’ to get out of danger.

Everyone out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea was completely surprised by everything that had happened. They were especially shocked by how quickly Meng Hao had reacted. To them, it was evidence of incredible quick thinking and resourcefulness.

“That’s right! All she had to do was concede, and then she was teleported out. It took a moment, but that was definitely the simplest method. How come I didn’t think of that!?”

“This Fang Mu is extremely quick-witted to come up with a plan like

that in such a situation!"

Up in the palace in the sky, the Matriarch from the Five Colors Sect took a deep breath and then glanced at Meng Hao on the vortex screen. Her expression was one of gratitude; she was not the type of person who liked to owe favors to others, so this was a kindness she would be sure to repay in the future.

"The arena matches will now continue," said Ling Yunzi from his position beneath the Dao Tree. "All of you must remember to never step foot outside of the arena. If any situation arises similar to what has just occurred, it would be much better to concede than to die." Ling Yunzi sighed. Although he was aware of why the Three Great Daoist Societies had chosen this place to hold the arena matches, the dangers of the area made it such that those in the Spirit Realm really should not be here.

# Chapter 871: Invincible Power!

The arena matches continued as the top 32 continued to fight. The dangers of the outside world had now become a sort of a tempering and assessment of their own.

Because the young woman from the Five Colors Sect conceded, Meng Hao was the first to complete this round, and he sat there cross-legged in the arena, looking at the half-headed man outside. The man looked back at him.

Although there was a vast gap of empty space between them, as they looked at each other, Meng Hao could sense the feeling of a summons rising up within him.

"If I get the chance, I WILL take back that sword!" Meng Hao's eyes flickered. Although the sword might not seem special to anyone else, to Meng Hao, it had the Sixth Demon Sealing Hex!

Each of the eight Demon Sealing Hexes were strange and mysterious. Both the Body Hexing and Karmic Hexing gave him superiority in flexibility when it came to fighting, and basically prevented anyone from guarding against his attacks.

After four hours passed, the various arena matches wound to a conclusion. The top 16 were now set. From over a thousand cultivators, successive victories had led these people into the top 16. Each and every one could be considered a peak expert of the Spirit Realm.

Experts like this could crush false Immortals, and could even compare to some extent to true Immortals. In fact, most of them would assuredly employ an Immortality Illumination Vine in the near future, after which it wouldn't be long before they became true Immortals.

Their path to Immortality would be a smooth one, and given their accumulated resources, it would only be a few short years before they were at the peak of the Immortal Realm.

This sequence of events happened once every ten thousand years; since

every true Immortal could cultivate at a speed that far exceeded a false Immortal, true Immortals always rose to prominence and became famous in all the Mountains and Seas.

Were it not for the incredible prizes being offered up during the arena matches, the various sects would not have sent their Chosen here, but would have kept them in secluded meditation to prepare for true Immortality.

Actually, one of the reasons even more Chosen hadn't joined the arena matches was that most of them were still in secluded meditation. Once they emerged, as long as they didn't fail in the process, they would be true Immortals.

Meng Hao took a deep breath, rose to his feet and looked around at the top 16 competitors in the arena matches.

Zhao Yifan was among them, as was Fan Dong'er. Sun Hai, surprisingly, was there too, as well as some of the other Chosen who Meng Hao had previously taken note of. As far as competitors from the trial by fire, Li Yan had been defeated, as had the young man with the mosquitoes and Junior Blood Immortal. Other than Meng Hao, the only remaining competitor from the trial by fire was the garrulous old man.

Top 16!

"Rest and recuperate for one day, and then the battle for the top 8 will begin!"

The next day, the battle for the top 8 began!

On the main trunk of the Dao Tree, at the very top, there was a single golden leaf. Beneath that were two silver leaves, further down were four bronze leaves, and beneath that were eight light green leaves.

The battles for the top 8 would be fought on those eight light green leaves!

Eight battles, fought simultaneously. All of the crowds in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were paying rapt attention.

"The top 8 will be selected from these sixteen people! Each one is a top expert of the Dao Seeking stage. This round is definitely going to be spectacular!"

"I wonder who exactly is going to win! Who's going to be eliminated!? Even the top 16 experts have no way of knowing!"

"The thing I'm most curious about is whether that Fang Mu will be able to enter the top 8!"

In the starry sky palace, the Patriarchs were also paying close attention.

By this point, many people had already forgotten about the main reason why the arena matches of the trial by fire were being held to begin with. Whoever took first place would have a chance to be taken in by the Three Great Daoist Sects as a disciple. The three Patriarchs from the Three Great Daoist Societies did nothing to remind anyone of this.

It was almost as if the taking of disciples wasn't very important at all.

Light glittered in front of Meng Hao and next, he was standing on a light green leaf. In front of him, a thin, emaciated figure appeared.

Although he was skinny, amorphous flames spread out around him as he walked forward. They were invisible, but Meng Hao could feel them, as if what was walking toward him was not a cultivator, but a flame Devil!

Within his eyes, flames could be seen flickering. He wore a long black robe, and his hair floated around him. He stood there, his energy surging, growing more and more powerful. In the blink of an eye, the air around him began to ripple and distort.

This was the Chosen from the Bones of the Flamedevil, one of the Five Holy Lands... Chen Hao!

Back in the ten stages of the trial by fire, the masked Li Yan had repeatedly performed just behind Meng Hao. He had been defeated by Chen Hao, although he had ended up seriously wounding Chen Hao in the process.

Meng Hao looked at him calmly, and Chen Hao looked back at him.

Neither of them spoke. The flames in Chen Hao's eyes burned bright, and the air around him distorted as the invisible flames burned. The flames seemed capable of scorching anything and everything as they shot toward Meng Hao.

No observer could see the fire, but by using divine sense, Meng Hao was able to sense them clearly. What he saw was an illusory body of flames rushing toward him.

"This is not the fire of the five elements!" Meng Hao thought, his eyes glittering. The fire of the five elements was a natural law of Heaven and Earth. In fact, the fire wielded by the young woman from the Five Colors Sect had contained that natural law. However, the flames unleashed by Chen Hao from the Bones of the Flamedevil had no natural law, but instead, a strange will!

After examining it closely for a moment, he realized that it seemed to be bound by some sort of summoning contract, as if... some all-powerful being had bestowed the power of the flames. It was as if this flame was actually a type of life force flame.

Meng Hao's expression was normal as he clenched his right hand into a fist. As soon as he punched out, a vortex appeared, which sent ripples spreading out. Explosive rumbling could be heard as it slammed into the flames, and was then completely submerged by them.

"Eee?" said Meng Hao, falling back for the first time. Chen Hao's eyes overflowed with the desire to fight, and as Meng Hao retreated, he advanced, performing an incantation gesture that caused more roaring flames to appear around him. Shockingly, they transformed into the shape of an enormous mouth that bit toward Meng Hao.

The sight of Meng Hao retreating caused quite a stir in the outside world. This was the first time they had ever seen him back up in a fight.

However, as the flame mouth closed in on him, Meng Hao stopped in place and set his jaw. A look of anticipation gleamed in his eyes as he performed an incantation gesture. Then, he punched out repeatedly, using the Nine Heavens Destruction once again.

Booms rattled out in all directions as Meng Hao then transformed into a vulture that shot toward Chen Hao like black lightning. Chen Hao's face fell, and he performed an incantation gesture. Immediately, a set of flaming armor appeared around him. He reached out with his right hand in a grasping motion, causing an enormous flame spear to materialize. His hands closed around it, and he stabbed it toward the incoming Meng Hao.

The scream of the spear was ear-splitting, and countless erupting volcanos appeared around it as it shot toward Meng Hao in shocking fashion.

Meng Hao snorted coldly as mountains of his own appeared and linked together into an equally shocking mountain range, although it appeared as a huge river to onlookers. It slammed into the volcanoes, causing a huge boom to rise into the air. It was at this point that Meng Hao's shocking Dharma Idol appeared behind him.

In that instant, Chen Hao tilted his back and roared. His own incredible Dharma Idol appeared, a corpse which was covered in scales and emanated black flames. It immediately began to contend with Meng Hao's Dharma Idol.

When the Dharma Idols collided, Meng Hao employed the Star Plucking Magic. An incredible force that Chen Hao could not resist suddenly grabbed him, causing a sense of crisis to well up inside of him. Letting out a bellow of rage, Chen Hao caused his suit of flame armor to detonate, using the force of the mighty explosion to fight against Meng Hao's Star Plucking Magic.

Chen Hao's face was ashen, and blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth. As of this point, he knew that he wasn't a match for Meng Hao, and yet he chose to continue fighting anyway.

However, in the instant that his flame armor exploded, Meng Hao's eyes began to shine with an intense desire to do battle. He strode forward; even the roaring flames could do nothing to prevent his charge. As he passed through the sea of flames, he let out a huge roar.

The roar caused the entire leaf to tremble, and even passed outside of

the Dao Tree itself. At the same time, his roar caused an enormous wind to spring up, slashing into the sea of flames and cutting a path through them directly to Chen Hao.

Chen Hao's face fell as he realized how powerful this Fang Mu was. It was only at this decisive moment of the battle that he realized that his opponent was completely terrifying. Magical techniques and divine abilities were secondary; the critical factor was his incredible energy.

"He has an aura of invincibility about him!" thought Chen Hao, madness glowing in his eyes. He bit his tongue and spit out some blood, which then transformed into lava, and then exploded into meteors that streaked through the air toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao snorted coldly, then pointed out with his right finger as he unleashed the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex onto the sea of flames and the shooting stars. No outsider would be able to tell what was happening, but Chen Hao's face instantly fell as his cultivation base lurched to a standstill.

The cost of that standstill was...

Meng Hao closed in, causing all of the shooting stars and the entire sea of flames to be sent spinning away. As Meng Hao bore down on Chen Hao, he punched out. A boom rang out as blood sprayed from Chen Hao's mouth. It only took a moment for him to recover, after which a fierce flame appeared in his eyes. Taking advantage of his backward motion, he spun his right leg around rapidly toward Meng Hao's head.

At the same time, a look of determination appeared in his eyes.

"Flamedevil Transformation!" he cried out

This battle was the complete focus of all eyes out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. As of now, they were beginning to see how invincible Meng Hao's power was. As for Chen Hao, he also possessed similar power. As they battled, neither of them spent any time on defense, but instead, consistently attacked!

Meng Hao did nothing to evade Chen Hao's spinning back kick. He lifted

his left hand and grabbed down hard onto Chen Hao's leg, sending a massive power of vibration into it. Rumbling could be heard, and Chen Hao coughed up some blood. However, by this time his entire body was turning red!

This red was not the red of blood, but rather, the red of flames!

It was as if all the blood in his body had turned into lava. Flames burst out all around him, engulfing him entirely. His skin didn't seem capable of bearing the flames, and began to split apart all over. Soon, the rips and tears covered him completely.

However, his energy exploded up, and despite the fact that Meng Hao was holding onto his leg tightly, he let out a bellow and caused flames to surge toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's expression was calm as he released his hand, then kicked out viciously with his foot. A boom could be heard as Chen Hao was sent flying several dozen meters back.

"Body transformation magic, huh?" said Meng Hao coolly. "Well, I'll just have to beat you back into your original state." He suddenly transformed into the vulture, which shot forward at incredible speed. In the blink of an eye, it appeared in front of Chen Hao and slashed at him with its claws. Then Meng Hao returned to human form and punched out with a fist.

BOOOMMM! After changing forms, Chen Hao thought that he would be even more powerful, capable of fighting Meng Hao. However, he never imagined that a few punches from Meng Hao would slam into him like wild tempests. The speed and power were incredible, and he was incapable of standing up to it. Just when he was about to try to resist, Meng Hao's divine sense transformed into an incredible crushing power that slammed down onto him.

# Chapter 872: She Appears!

Meng Hao advanced as if he were crushing rotten twigs. Chen Hao fell back continuously. In the blink of an eye, dozens of lightning-like exchanges occurred between the two of them. Chen Hao constantly coughed up blood, and his energy was rapidly depleting. In the end, he slammed down onto the surface of the arena. The flames covering his body were extinguished, and blood spurted out all over. After struggling to his feet, he found a long spear leveled against his throat.

It was none other than the spear Meng Hao had acquired in the Warrior Pavilion, with the shaft made from part of the World Tree, and a sharp bone spearhead. Thanks to the power of the black feather, however, it looked completely different, and was something no one would ever recognize.

Chen Hao shivered as he sensed the murderous aura coming from the spearhead, which left his entire body feeling ice cold. Then there was Meng Hao, whose eyes had remained intensely cold from the beginning of their battle until this moment. He seemed to be waiting for Chen Hao to say something, and if Chen Hao didn't say it... then the spear would immediately stab completely through his throat.

Meng Hao didn't say anything. He just looked calmly at Chen Hao.

Out in the world of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, cultivators watched the match with thumping hearts. They had never heard of Fang Mu before, but now, he astonished them in battle after battle, proving that he was more powerful than any opponent could imagine!!

"He can definitely take first place!!"

"Heavens, he took first place in the trial by fire already. If he also takes first place in the arena matches, then he... he...."

"This is matchlessly breathtaking! Throughout all the years, there has never been another person like this!"

"Just who is he? There's no way a person like him could be an obscure

nobody!"

While the audiences were in an uproar, the 10th Wang Clan Patriarch floated in the starry sky. His eyes glittered brightly, and Immortal qi swirled around him for a long moment before he retracted it. The desire to fight burned strongly in his eyes.

"Meng Hao...."

Near Planet East Victory, Patriarch Reliance switched back and forth between smiling broadly and gnashing his teeth. He definitely had very complex feelings regarding Meng Hao.

Everyone was watching as Chen Hao lay silently in the arena. He took a deep, painful breath and looked up at Meng Hao.

"How much of your cultivation base did you use?" he asked suddenly.

"Is that really important?" Meng Hao replied coolly.

"It is to me!" said Chen Hao firmly.

"Well, not to me." Meng Hao shook his head, staring at Chen Hao coldly and with a bit of impatience.

Chen Hao's trembling heart filled with coldness. Then he suddenly recalled standing in the outside world, watching some of Fang Mu's bizarre actions. Immediately, he pulled a bag of holding out from within his robe.

"There are over 3,000,000 spirit stones here. I didn't bring many with me today, but you can have them if you just answer my question."

Moments before, Meng Hao's expression had been ice cold, as emotionless as a cold-blooded killer. Now, however, his eyes narrowed, and a slight smile could be seen on his face. It happened so quickly that Chen Hao stared in shock.

Meng Hao quickly grabbed the bag of holding and scanned it with his spiritual sense. Finally, his face beamed with joy.

"Elder Brother Chen, there's really no need for this," he said, licking his lips. "It's just a question, right? What's the point in pulling out so many

spirit stones? Alright, alright. If I refused them, that would be an insult to you. In that case, I guess I'll just have to suck it up and take them." His current expression was indeed vastly different than what it had been before. Chen Hao stared in disbelief at how different Meng Hao was now, and how quickly he had changed. It seemed unbelievable how completely natural the change had come to him.

"Taking money to resolve others' issues... Elder Brother Chen... just now I was using..."

"Seventy percent full power!" These last four words were transmitted directly into Chen Hao's mind. Of course, as to how much he actually used, naturally, that was something he would never reveal.

Chen Hao rose to his feet, taciturn. He didn't want to believe Meng Hao, but the answer mostly lined up with his own judgement and perception. Giving Meng Hao a long, penetrating look, he finally uttered the words 'I concede.'

Immediately, he faded away and reappeared on the first level of leaves.

Meng Hao was feeling very pleased. He had never imagined that he would be able to earn some spirit stones in the middle of fighting. Suddenly, he looked up in thought, and then an annoyed expression appeared on his face.

"How could I have forgotten about making money? If I'd thought of doing this earlier, I probably could have made a small fortune in the past few matches."

As the battles to decide the top 8 continued, Meng Hao sat down cross-legged. After glancing around at the other battles going on around him, he looked down toward the Nascent Soul arena matches, and Chen Fan.

The Nascent Soul arena matches were also in the middle of determining their top 8. Chen Fan was soaked in blood as he fought a young woman. A look of annoyance could be seen on her face as they fought back and forth. Up to this point in the battle, the gloomy will cast out by Chen Fan's attacks had kept the woman feeling quite suppressed.

However, this young woman was not one of the trial by fire competitors. She was a Nascent Soul Chosen from the Solitary Sword Pavilion, and was definitely powerful enough to make it into the top 4. She and Chen Fan were currently fighting back and forth.

Meng Hao watched the battle silently. Based on the level of his cultivation base, he was able to tell that Chen Fan had reached the end of the line in this battle.

Moments later, Chen Fan lost, and was unable to enter the top 8. He clasped hands silently to the young woman as his body faded away, and he reappeared down below.

Meng Hao sighed. He had sensed the deep bitterness within Chen Fan on previous occasions, but it wasn't until Xu Qing finally departed that he came to understand why Chen Fan had fallen so low.

Time passed, and rumbling booms echoed out. Gradually, victory and defeat were determined in multiple arenas. However, it was at this time that, all of a sudden, numerous figures began to appear outside of the Dao Tree. They hovered there, faces blank as they stared at the arena matches on the Dao Tree.

Each and every one of these figures emanated auras that would cause anyone to tremble. Ling Yunzi and the other two old men immediately started to get nervous.

By the time the battles to select the top 8 had concluded, there were numerous terrifying figures outside of the Dao Tree. One of them had the upper body of a cultivator and the tail of a snake. The creature materialized in midair, then looked coldly over at the Dao Tree, her eyes flickering with a bloodthirsty gleam.

There was another shocking thing that attracted all eyes. It was not a living creature, but rather, an enormous battle-ax. The head of the ax was carved with mountains and rivers, and appeared to be flecked with rust. The battle-ax made no sound as it materialized, but after it appeared, most of the other entities near it immediately moved away.

This battle-ax sent the crowds out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea into

an uproar. However, there were actually few people who knew what the battle-ax represented, other than... the Patriarchs in the starry sky palace.

The three Patriarchs from the Three Great Daoist Societies all rose to their feet. Their expressions were deeply solemn, and within their eyes could be seen gleams of hope and excitement.

The Patriarchs from the other clans also had serious expressions as they stood up. One of the main reasons they had agreed to hold the arena matches in the Ruins of Immortality was because of the plan that had been laid out before them earlier by the Three Great Daoist Societies.

If that plan succeeded, then all of the sects would benefit.

“So... will SHE appear...?” asked the old man from the Kunlun Society. When he spoke the word ‘she,’ his voice quavered a bit.

“Perhaps, perhaps not,” said the Patriarch from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto. “Either way, we have a chance.”

Back in the location of the Dao Seeking arena matches, the top 8 had been selected. They stood on their eight respective green leaves, the center of all attention.

Those eight cultivators included Meng Hao, the garrulous old man, Zhao Yifan, Fan Dong’er, and Li Ling’er. In addition to those five, there was the young man from the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum, who fought using corpses and coffins.

The seventh person was the tall, muscular man from the Kunlun Society who attacked with descending mountains. He was the one who had defeated Sun Hai.

The last person was the youth from the Burning Incense Stick Society. He had a third eye on his forehead, and throughout all the matches, had only ever attacked anyone once. All the other times, he merely transmitted some words, whereupon his opponents would prostrate themselves on the ground and look at him with fanatical piety.

Of these eight people, six were Chosen, and two were competitors from the trial by fire. They were now the focus of all attention from the outside

world.

Countless eyes looked on with anticipation, waiting to find out which of the eight would make it into the semifinals, and after that, the final battle!

"The semifinal qualification matches will be different than the previous matches," said Ling Yunzi, his voice echoing out in all directions.

"Victory will no longer be determined by a single battle. Each and every one of you must fight at least four battles!"

"First, we will determine who are the top 4 and the bottom 4. The winners of the first fight will become the top 4, the losers will be the bottom 4.

"Then, each of the top 4 will fight the remaining three competitors who they did not fight previously. In the end, the four people who end up with the most victories will become the final 4!"

"The outcome of any tie will be determined by a tie-breaking match.

"You will have three days to rest and recuperate. After that, the semifinal qualification matches will begin!" This method of determining the final 4 would prevent anyone from winning out through sheer luck. Furthermore, the final 4 would well and truly deserve to be called the most powerful!

The Three Great Daoist Societies had decided on this method, and none of the other sects had disagreed.

Time passed. Meng Hao sat there cross-legged, feeling quite confident. However, the other seven people in the competition were all powerful experts, especially Zhao Yifan and the others. Meng Hao had already tangled with them on Planet South Heaven, and was very curious as to how the coming matches would turn out.

Even more curious were the audiences out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Many bets had already been placed on the final outcomes.

"Zhao Yifan will definitely make it to the semifinals!"

"Fan Dong'er will most likely make it as well!"

"I wonder if Fang Mu will be able to continue his legendary run!"

Three days later, just when Ling Yunzi's echoing voice was announcing the beginning of the semifinals qualification matches, and all eyes in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were focused on the vortex screens in anticipation....

Suddenly, music could be heard drifting toward the Dao Tree from off in the distance. The music drifted slowly about, echoing in the ears, penetrating the mind. Everyone who heard it suddenly felt sorrow in their hearts, which immediately influenced their emotions.

It was a sad song, filled with longing, as if it were recalling the past, and an old friend.

As the music echoed about, a woman approached from off in the distance. She wore a snow-white gown, and was stunningly beautiful. She approached slowly and came to a stop above the Dao Tree. Her face was ice cold, seemingly devoid of any emotion whatsoever.

Her sudden appearance on the scene caused everyone to stare in shock. She was as different from the other beings in the Ruins of Immortality as black is from white. Immediately, the black wind shuddered, and the huge roc let out a miserable shriek; they both fled in terror at top speed.

Apparently, that roc had been killed by the woman in the past!

As for the blood-colored eye, it shrank back, trembling, and then fled. The other almighty figures all dropped to their knees and then... kowtowed to the woman!

As for the naga cultivator, she let out a shriek of astonishment and then fled, terrified.

# Chapter 873: She's a Paragon!

The battle-ax emitted a droning sound as it approached the white-robed woman, and began to circulate around her. She looked at it, and slowly, an expression of reminiscence and sorrow appeared on her face.

Everyone on the ancient Dao Tree felt their hearts thumping as they stared blankly at the woman.

Ling Yunzi and the other two old men were also trembling, and their faces were pale white. They said absolutely nothing.

Meng Hao's eyes widened as well. However, what was most concerning to him was not the woman and her appearance on the scene, but the fact that the half-headed man who had been following him, and was now hovering near the arenas, did not flee or bow like the other beings. He quivered a bit, but by force of will remained hovering there just as before.

When Meng Hao saw this, his heart began to pound.

It was at this point that the Patriarchs from the Three Great Daoist Societies urgently stepped forward toward the vortex. Their expressions were that of shock, and they seemed to be thinking a variety of thoughts. Moments later, though, they began to tremble with wild joy.

All of the other Patriarchs were staring at the woman, dumbstruck.

"It's actually... HER!!"

"She looks exactly like the image recorded in the sect's records!"

"When the Three Great Daoist Societies told us about their plan, I thought it was crazy.... That woman... how could she be alive after all this time!?!?"

The Patriarchs from all the sects were now on their feet, staring at the white-robed woman in the vortex screen in disbelief.

"She's the Paragon from the legends...." murmured the old man from the Kunlun Society.

Similar words echoed about in the minds of all of the other Patriarchs in

the starry sky palace, and waves of audible gasps arose from the crowd there.

Meanwhile, at the very peak of the Ninth Mountain, was a statue of a cross-legged man, sitting atop a boulder. The statue seemed devoid of any life force whatsoever, and yet, in this instant, cracks spread out across the surface of the statue. At the same time, the stars in the sky above the Ninth Mountain went dim, with the exception of one, which shone brilliantly, almost as if it were a solitary eye.

It seemed expressionless and ancient, as if it could lord it over all the entire starry sky and everything in it. It looked at the nearby vortex screen and saw the woman floating there, and the eye... trembled.

“Paragon....” murmured an ancient voice.

Back by the arenas, the white-robed woman hovered there in midair, looking at the Dao Tree. All of the cultivators on the tree got the feeling that she was examining them personally.

Ling Yunzi was panting, as were the two old men next to him. After a long moment passed, he clenched his teeth violently and then, face ashen, said, “Cultivators of the Nascent Soul, Spirit Severing, and Dao Seeking stages in the arena matches, let the qualifying round for the semifinals begin!

“Unleash your most powerful divine abilities. Let loose your most powerful Daos. All of you... are fighting in arena matches. However, this is also... a chance for perhaps the greatest good fortune of your entire lives!

“Whether or not you can seize this opportunity is up to your own destiny!” Ling Yunzi wasn’t able to reveal any further information. What he had already said pushed the limits of the boundaries.

His words caused the hearts of all the cultivators in the arenas to tremble. Meng Hao was especially interested in the white-robed woman.

He got a very strange sensation when he looked at her. He could see her with his physical eyes, but when he tried to look at her with divine sense, it was as if she wasn’t even there.

It was at this point that glittering light surrounded all of the cultivators, and they appeared on the green layer of leaves. In the blink of an eye, everyone was facing an opponent.

Meng Hao's opponent was none other than... Li Ling'er!

Zhao Yifan was facing the hulking man from the Kunlun Society. As for the other matches, the garrulous old man was up against the smiling youth from the Burning Incense Stick Society.

The last match was between Fan Dong'er and the young man from the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum.

The match to decide the top 4 and the bottom 4 was now beginning!

As Li Ling'er and Meng Hao faced off against each other, the willow leaf mark on Li Ling'er's forehead suddenly began to shine brightly, and an incredible aura exploded out from her.

A strange expression could be seen on Meng Hao's face, and he cleared his throat. Without even thinking about it, he glanced toward her rear end.

"How shameless!" she said with a cold frown. She raised her right hand, instantly causing an ancient, archaic tree to appear behind her. Shockingly, as soon as it materialized, it seemed to form a resonance with the ancient Dao Tree, and brilliant light rose up to surround Li Ling'er, causing her energy to surge.

She waved her hand, causing the ancient tree's branches to whip through the air, weaving together almost like vines as they snaked toward Meng Hao at incredible speed.

This was not the first time Meng Hao had gone up against Li Ling'er. Back in the Southern Domain, he had defeated her and taken her captive. However, his victory had come as the result of a bit of trickery; he had used the teleportation power of the Lightning Cauldron to quickly defeat her.

It was not possible to use the Lightning Cauldron in the arena matches, lest he reveal his identity.

However, Meng Hao was also different than he had been during their initial encounter. Now he had an Immortal meridian that was eighty percent solidified, and his true Immortal powers made him vastly, vastly more powerful than before.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he observed the incoming vines. Then, he kicked out, his energy surging with the power of true Immortality. Behind him, his Dharma Idol appeared, disguised with the transformative powers of the black feather. The gigantic Dharma Idol brandished its fists and then punched out, causing boundless light to appear that transformed into a Dharma Sea, which then shot toward the incoming vines.

A huge boom could be heard, and massive ripples spread out. Meng Hao didn't back up even an inch, but instead headed directly toward Li Ling'er. Last time, he had relied on his aura of invincibility to capture her. Now, his true fighting style could be unleashed. As he closed in, he transformed into a vulture, which slashed its claws toward Li Ling'er with lightning speed.

Li Ling'er's face flickered, and she performed a double-handed incantation gesture. A magical bottle appeared, which she then tossed out ahead of her.

"Shatter!" said Meng Hao. His vulture-form slashed viciously at the bottle, and at the same time, he secretly unleashed the claw magic that he had learned from the wall of the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple. 1

A boom rang out as the bottle exploded. In their last encounter, Meng Hao had been forced to use the Blood Demon Grand Magic to deal with the magical bottle, but this time, all it took was a single strike on his part.  
2

It was just a simple magical technique, but Meng Hao could clearly sense how much more powerful it was now.

Li Ling'er's face fell, and she began to pant. She anxiously fell into retreat, and yet, no matter how fast she moved, Meng Hao always kept up, bearing down on her as the vicious vulture. He slashed at her again, causing the air to vibrate, as a will of invincibility exploded out.

BOOOOMMM!

Li Ling'er was defeated in exchange after exchange. No matter how she attacked, no matter what divine abilities or magical techniques she employed, regardless of the various magical items she used, they were all useless. Meng Hao bashed her over and over again like a buffeting windstorm, as easily as he would step on a dried weed.

After only the space of a few breaths, the two had exchanged dozens of blows. Blood sprayed from Li Ling'er's mouth, and a look of shock could be seen on her face. This match immediately caused her to recall Meng Hao from Planet South Heaven. He was equally swift and fierce, equally invincible, equally impossible to rattle.

Were it not for the fact that she got the feeling that this Fang Mu far exceeded Meng Hao, she would definitely have assumed that they were one and the same person!

"They can't be the same," she thought. "Meng Hao might have possessed a will of invincibility, but his energy was not incredible like this. Fang Mu... has intense energy, far more than that damned Meng Hao!" She fell back again, gritted her teeth, and performed another incantation gesture, causing her enormous tree to suddenly begin to vibrate.

"World Tree, detonate. Rebuke the Heavens with your spirit. Transform for me! Stifle all the earth!"

Li Ling'er's voice echoed with an ancient cadence, and immediately caused the air between her and Meng Hao to echo with deep rumbling.

Thump!!

The sound caused everything to shake. The surface of the arena trembled, and Meng Hao's face flickered. Li Ling'er had used this exact same divine ability the last time they had fought, and it was as astonishing as it had been before; the pressure exerted by the image of the World Tree was intense.

Last time, if he hadn't possessed the sunstone, he would never have been able to win the battle. After all, Li Ling'er possessed fifty percent of the

might of a true Immortal.

Thump!

Thump!!

THUMP!!!

The successive rumbling sounds seemed to strike at Meng Hao's heart. The air around him distorted, and wild colors flashed. Everything was shaking as the tree behind Li Ling'er suddenly collapsed. Its leaves fell, and its branches withered until all that was left of the tree was a single log!

It was... the World Tree!

As it fell towards the ground, it emitted a droning sound and passed through Li Ling'er to shoot toward Meng Hao. She performed a double handed incantation, causing her hair to whip around her head, and more power to pour into the attack.

At the same time, a pearl appeared above her head. It began to rotate rapidly, which would apparently sustain her cultivation base, preventing it from being drained by the tree.

"That's nothing but an illusory World Tree!" said Meng Hao, his eyes glittering. His cultivation base far exceeded its previous level. He extended his right hand, and the World Tree spear appeared with its bone spearhead. Meng Hao hefted it and then flung it toward the incoming illusory World Tree.

From the perspective of the spectators in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, a green sun suddenly appeared between Meng Hao and Li Ling'er as the World Tree and the long spear slammed into each other.

In the blink of an eye, a monstrous roaring sound filled the air as the illusory World Tree trembled and, incapable of standing up to the long spear, collapsed into pieces and then violently exploded.

The spear sliced through the illusory tree like a sharp knife through a piece of bamboo, emerging from the shattered remnants to bear down on

Li Ling'er with incredible speed.

In that critical moment, the pearl floating above Li Ling'er's head shattered, causing a gentle force to flow out and then shove her off to the side. The long spear whistled through the air, kicking up a powerful wind that instantly sent Li Ling'er's hair into complete and utter disarray. Meng Hao appeared off to Li Ling'er's side, grasping the long spear and glancing down at her curvaceous rear end.

At the same time, Li Ling'er, who had just avoided the attack, looked over with eyes that flickered with killing intent. In the same moment that she passed Meng Hao, she raised her right hand, gathered the power of the exploded pearl treasure, and then stabbed her two fingers toward Meng Hao's eyes.

In that instant, Meng Hao let out a cold snort and extended his left hand to violently spank Li Ling'er's buttocks!

It was a cruel strike, similar to the strike which had landed on her not too long ago....

The slapping sound was accompanied by a miserable shriek from Li Ling'er. Once again, her rear end was now uneven, she even felt her pelvis creaking. She immediately staggered backward in retreat, her face pale and devoid of any blood.

\*

1. This “claw magic” is a reference to something he learned in [chapter 809](#).
2. Meng Hao fought with Li Ling'er in [chapter 821](#).

# Chapter 874: Semifinals!

"I'm gonna kill you!" raged Li Ling'er. Subconsciously, she had already superimposed Meng Hao's image over Fang Mu. She didn't realize that this had happened, as the sudden intense pain in that specific region left her with no time for deep consideration.

Just when she had been about to attack, agonizing pain sent her staggering backward. At the same time, the long spear whistled through the air and came to a stop right in front of her forehead.

Meng Hao looked down at her coldly. After the previous incident, his mother had told him that Li Ling'er was the same Princess Ling'er whose hair he had lit on fire as a child. He also knew that his Grandpa Fang had arranged for the two of them to be married.

However, Meng Hao did not approve of such an agreement. He only had one wife, and that was Xu Qing.

Li Ling'er trembled as she felt the coldness radiating off of the spear that was pointed at her forehead. A sensation of imminent death washed over her, and she knew that if she didn't say the two words that Meng Hao was expecting to hear, the spearhead would unhesitatingly stab directly into her forehead.

"I don't want to kill you," Meng Hao said coolly. Actually, there was something else that he wanted to say.... He still had Li Ling'er's promissory note in his bag of holding, so until he got his spirit stones, he needed her alive.

If she died, who would repay the spirit stones...?

Li Ling'er glared at Meng Hao, her ample chest rising and falling as she breathed heavily. Finally, she gritted her teeth and slowly said the two words.

"I concede." Immediately, she vanished, then reappeared on the next layer of leaves. She had not lost her chance to get into the semifinals. If she won out in the following three matches, she would still have that

opportunity.

After all, this first round was only to determine who was in the top 4 and the bottom 4.

Immediately, the crowds in the Ninth Mountain and Sea began to comment.

“Fang Mu beat Li Ling’er!”

“He’ll definitely be in the top 4! Li Ling’er is a Chosen of the Li Clan, and will without doubt become a true Immortal in the future. I even heard that she’s never been beaten before, and that a fight between her and Fan Dong’er once ended in a draw!”

“This Fang Mu is invincible!”

Meng Hao was actually not the first person to secure a win. Shockingly, the first battle to end was the one between Zhao Yifan and the hulking man from the Kunlun Society.

That battle had been just as astonishing as Meng Hao’s fight just now, and had drawn quite a bit of attention. When the man from the Kunlun Society attacked, he used an enormous chain of mountains. Even he himself seemed like a mountain, completely impervious to all attacks.

However, Zhao Yifan was also a terrifying figure, which became clearly apparent in their battle. He only used six Earth-shattering sword moves in the fight. Each sword attack was more shocking than the one before it, and they slashed down onto the mountains, severely injuring the big man from the Kunlun Society.

The final sword blow was so powerful that the man from the Kunlun Society was powerless to resist it. His mountains exploded, and were it not for the fact that Zhao Yifan was holding back his killing intent, the man would definitely have been slain.

The battle’s result caused quite a commotion in the outside world. Unfortunately, the Patriarchs in the starry sky palace were not watching the arena matches, but instead were focused on the white-robed woman. Their expressions were a mix of reverence and other complex emotions.

Booming sounds continued to rattle out as the garrulous old man, one of the trial by fire competitors, fought against the young man from the Burning Incense Stick Society. Although their ages were different, both of them gave off the feeling that they were hustlers of some kind.

One of them didn't attack, but rather, constantly mumbled and chattered madly at his opponents, frothing at the mouth. The other smiled and transmitted words into his opponent's minds, causing them to fall down and worship him. In fact, even after those battles ended, the opponents would continue to look piously at the young man from down below on the lowest layer of leaves.

When they fought, they didn't engage in close quarter fighting. Instead, they sat down cross-legged and looked at each other. Although nothing usual seemed to be going on, those who were in the know understood that they were currently in an extremely ruthless showdown.

“A battle of divine will!”

“The Burning Incense Stick Society excels in the use of divine will. They coalesce the will of many living things to become their Dao of burning incense. Xie Yixian is a Chosen of the Burning Incense Stick Society, and supposedly, he's in the running to become Dao Child! His strength in divine will is spectacular!” 1

“If I remember correctly, the old man's name is Qian Duoduo. He... is actually going to participate in a divine will contest with Xie Yixian from the Burning Incense Stick Society!” 2

On the other battleground, Fan Dong'er was facing the young man from the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum. Fierce fighting raged between the two of them, and the face of the young man from the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum twisted with passion. His eyes seemed capable of melting any coldness, but what had driven him mad was not Fan Dong'er. Rather, part of the mist behind Fan Dong'er had been scattered during the course of the fighting to reveal the female corpse behind her.

“That is... the most beautiful corpse I have seen in my entire life!” murmured the young man. Seven coffins were arrayed in front of him, all

of them opened to reveal seven corpses, which he was using to fight Fan Dong'er.

Fan Dong'er was on the verge of going mad. Right now, there was nothing she hated more in the world than corpses, and the look in her opponent's eyes filled her with revulsion.

Booms rang out, and time slipped by. The white-robed woman continued to float above the Dao Tree, coldly watching the cultivators in the arena matches. It was impossible to tell what she might be thinking.

After a long moment passed, a boom rattled out next to Fan Dong'er, and the young man coughed up a mouthful of blood. He fell back, and as he did, a black hair suddenly appeared in his hand. It did not belong to Fan Dong'er, but rather, the female corpse.

Fan Dong'er's face twisted into a unsightly expression as the mist behind her vanished. The white-robed corpse was now clearly visible to everyone who was watching in the Ninth Mountain and Sea.



Official ISSTH art of Fan Dong'er

"I concede!" cried the young man from the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum. He coughed up some more blood, but his face was plastered with a look of enchantment. He held the hair up to his nose and inhaled deeply, then carefully put the hair away. Eyes burning, he looked over at the female corpse behind Fan Dong'er.

"She is my true love. Fan Dong'er, you better take good care of her." With that, the young man vanished to appear on the set of leaves for the bottom contenders among the top 8. However, he continued to look down at the corpse, intoxicated.

Discussions immediately rose up among the audiences in the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

"That guy Xiao Luo from the Paleo-Immortal Museum is such a pervert! He's a Chosen, but it turns out he's actually a necrophiliac!" 3

"I can't believe what everyone has been saying is true! There's a female corpse floating behind Fan Dong'er!"

"From what I heard, the corpse got attached to her when she ran into some fellow named Meng Hao on Planet South Heaven!"

As the crowds buzzed about the matter, the match between the garrulous Qian Duoduo and Xie Yixian from the Burning Incense Stick Society had come to an end. Xie Yixian's face was flushed, and blood gushed out of his mouth. After wiping it off, he sighed lightly, rose to his feet, and bowed to the old man.

"I have been thoroughly convinced that your divine will magic is an amazing inheritance, Fellow Daoist," he said. "I, Xie, concede."

Qian Duoduo's face was also a bit pale. His eyes snapped open and he rose to his feet, then solemnly clasped hands toward Xie Yixian.

Conversations immediately broke out.

"So, Qian Duoduo actually won!!"

"He defeated Xie Yixian from the Burning Incense Stick Society. Just how strong is his divine will? He's really a dark horse in this competition. Earlier I had assumed he wouldn't make it past the top 16. I never imagined he would pull off a win like this and make it into the top 4!"

Regardless of the analyses of the outside crowds, the top 4 had been decided: Meng Hao, Zhao Yifan, Qian Duoduo, and Fan Dong'er!

The bottom four consisted of Li Ling'er, Xie Yixian, Xiao Luo and the

hulking man from the Kunlun Society. What would happen next would be the final three battles of the round!

Now everyone from the top four would have to fight against the rest of the bottom four. After all of the battles were completed, the four people with the most wins would become the semifinalists!

After six hours of rest, when everyone was back at their peak readiness, the second fight in the struggle to qualify for the semifinals began! Meng Hao stood motionless on the bronze leaf as light glittered in front of him to reveal the hulking man from the Kunlun Society.

The man stepped forward, and it was like the descent of numerous mountains, although Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever. Regarding the various sects of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, he was already familiar with the Demon Immortal Sect, because of Zhixiang. Also, he knew of... the Kunlun Society.

His master Pill Demon had joined the Kunlun Society, and because of that, Meng Hao smiled amiably at the hulking man.

The big man stared in shock, then nodded at Meng Hao and clasped hands.

"I am Yang Yi from the Kunlun Society," he said. "Fellow Daoist Fang, please give me some fighting tips!"

"Of course!" replied Meng Hao, clasping hands back at the man.

Introductions having been made, Yang Yi's eyes began to glow brightly, and a massive aura exploded out as he charged toward Meng Hao. As he neared, shockingly, numerous mountains materialized around him.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever, but his pupils constricted. He had noticed before that this hulking man was actually wielding... the Mountain Consuming Incantation!!

The Mountain Consuming Incantation was a Daoist magic from the ancient Demon Immortal Sect, and previously, Meng Hao had assumed it was something only he could wield. Having seen the hulking Yang Yi in action, though, he was now much more interested in the Kunlun Society.

"So, the Mountain Consuming Incantation...?" thought Meng Hao. Laughing inwardly, he also stepped forward, causing numerous mountains to materialize around him. Of course, with the help of the black feather, he made them look like streams of water.

In the blink of an eye, the two began to fight back and forth. They did not use a variety of techniques, but rather, focused on the Mountain Consuming Incantation, and their incredibly powerful fleshly bodies.

RUMMMBLE!

Dozens of exchanges occurred, after which Yang Yi fell back, body trembling, but eyes overflowing with the desire to fight.

"Wonderful! This match is far more enjoyable than the fight with Zhao Yifan!" Yang Yi laughed heartily, then clenched his fists, causing the mountains around him to link up into a mountain range. He himself seemed to change into an enormous mountain.

Meng Hao was laughing as loudly as Yang Yi. He attacked, causing the streams to unite into a mighty river that rumbled through the air. They fought back and forth again, holding nothing back. Booms echoed out, attracting quite a bit of attention from the shocked audience.

They didn't fight for very long, only enough time for an incense stick to burn. Finally, Yang Yi was sent staggering backward seven or eight paces. Panting, he flicked his sleeve, causing the mountains to vanish. Then he stood there and gazed deeply at Meng Hao. Finally, he shook his head and laughed.

"I'm not a match for you. I have to concede! However, I do have to say that this was the most fun I've had in all of the arena matches!"

"Yang Yi won't be entering the semifinals. However, if you have time, Elder Brother Fang, please come to the Kunlun Society so that we can drink together!"

Meng Hao laughed. He could sense that Yang Yi was an outspoken and straightforward person. After all of Meng Hao's years spent in the world of cultivation, he could tell that the man was no hypocrite or faker. Meng

Hao nodded and smiled.

"I will definitely be going to the Kunlun Society!" he said.

Yang Yi laughed as he faded away to reappear on another leaf for his third battle.

Meng Hao took a deep breath and then sat down cross-legged. After an hour passed, light suddenly glittered as the third battle began. However, no opponent appeared. Instead, rumbling could be heard as nine coffins materialized, smashing down from up above.

"The female corpse behind Fan Dong'er is my true love, so I can't harm her. The rest of you, however, are completely different!" The voice which spoke was soft and feminine, but the figure who walked out of the light was a man.

This was none other than Xiao Luo from the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum, one of the Five Great Holy Lands!

\*

1. Xie Yixian's name in Chinese is 谢一仙 xiè yī xiān. Xie is a surname which also means 'thanks.' Yi means 'one,' and Xian means 'Immortal'.
2. Qian Duoduo's name in Chinese is 钱多多 qián duō duō. Qian is a surname which also means 'money.' Both Duo characters mean 'many' or 'more'.
3. Xiao Luo's name in Chinese is 肖罗 xiào luō. Xiao is a surname which means 'resemble.' Luo means a lot of things including 'net'.

# Chapter 875: Domineering!

When Xiao Luo made his appearance, a cold wind sprang up, causing his hair and robes to flutter. He was clearly male, but there was also something overtly feminine about him. This was especially true when it came to his cheerless eyes, which caused his handsome features to be strangely twisted.

Xiao Luo stood there in the middle of the arena, looking at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he stood there looking past the nine upright coffins at Xiao Luo.

"Nine Heavens Asura Squad!" cried Xiao Luo, his eyes flickering with killing intent. He waved his hand, causing rumbling sounds to emanate out of the nine coffins, which then simultaneously opened, causing a thick aura of death to spill out.

The air twisted, and strange colors danced. Nine tall figures appeared within the coffins, nine corpses who abounded with auras of death. Their bodies were not decomposing, but rather, mummified. They wore tattered clothing and had vicious expressions, and it was just possible to tell that seven were men and two were women.

"Kill him!" said Xiao Luo with a vicious chuckle. A ruthless gleam could be seen in his eyes as the nine corpses charged toward Meng Hao, kicking up a foul wind.

They closed in on Meng Hao in the blink of an eye. However, Meng Hao's expression didn't change in the slightest. He extended his right hand, within which materialized the World Tree spear with the bone spearhead. Then, he dashed forward like the wind, the spearhead leading the way.

A bang could be heard, along with an ear-piercing rumble as a huge vortex appeared, spreading out in all directions and instantly interfering with the nine corpses' movement.

Meng Hao moved rapidly, bypassing the corpses and heading directly

toward Xiao Luo. In the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint, Xiao Luo performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and pointed toward the surface of the arena. Immediately, Yin-type qi surged up, transforming into a blast that shot toward Meng Hao like a huge wall.

A boom could be heard as Meng Hao's spear pierced the Yin qi wall. The wall shuddered and then collapsed, after which Xiao Luo waved his hand, causing nine black magical needles to appear. They immediately shot toward Meng Hao like nine black vipers.

At the same time, the nine corpses that were now behind Meng Hao turned, becoming black beams of light that immediately began to surround Meng Hao.

Xiao Luo laughed coldly. He had unleashed his most powerful magic in an attempt to catch his opponent off-guard.

"DIE!"

In this moment of deadly crisis, Meng Hao simply snorted. He stabbed his spear into the surface of the leaf, causing a boom to echo out. Cracks spread out across the surface of the arena as a shocking energy suddenly exploded. It transformed into a storm-like vortex that spread out in all directions, slamming into the corpses. The corpses fell back, trembling, and as for the nine needles, cracking sounds could be heard as they simply fell to pieces mid-flight.

Within the screaming vortex, Meng Hao released his grip on the spear, then transformed into the vulture. There was a flash, and then he appeared directly in front of Xiao Luo and slashed at him viciously.

Boom!

Xiao Luo's face fell, and he quickly performed an incantation gesture, causing the Yin qi to surge, transforming into another wall to block against the vulture's slash. A huge boom could be heard as that wall collapsed, too. Before Xiao Luo could even fall back in retreat, the vulture vanished and Meng Hao reappeared, his leg flashing around in a spinning kick.

A bang could be heard as the kick, seemingly powerful enough to smash mountains, formed a semicircle and slammed directly into Xiao Luo. In that critical moment, Xiao Luo's eyes went wide, and he spit a pearl out of his mouth. The pearl emanated a powerful glow that attempted to block the kick, and yet instantly shattered, completely incapable of standing up to the attack. However, it did manage to give Xiao Luo a moment of breathing room. Coughing up blood, he rapidly fell backward in retreat.

At the same time, Meng Hao increased his speed and levied another attack. Currently, he paid no heed to defending, but rather, attacked like lightning, like a windstorm that could crush anything in its path.

He bore down on Xiao Luo like a tempest, performing an incantation with his right hand and then stabbing his finger out ahead of him. The shocking finger attack caused the air to vibrate, and Xiao Luo's face to fall. This magical battle was unfolding so quickly that Xiao Luo had no time to even breathe. He had to exercise complete and utter attention; the slightest misstep would leave him dead.

Xiao Luo performed an incantation gesture as fast as possible, causing the Yin qi to form into numerous pearls.

"Burst! Burst! BURST!" roared Xiao Luo. Booms rang out as the pearls flew toward Meng Hao and then exploded, transforming into a powerful shockwave that swept out in all directions. A vicious smile appeared on Xiao Luo's face. The Yin qi pearls seemed ordinary, but in fact, they were a secret magic from the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum. Any one of those explosions was powerful enough to slay a peak Dao seeking expert.

Xiao Luo knew his opponent was powerful, but even a Stone Golem would at least be injured by their detonation.

"I just need to put a bit of distance between us," Xiao Luo thought with a cold laugh. "Then I can send the nine corpses to slaughter him!" Just as Xiao Luo was about to continue to fall back, the air twisted as Meng Hao actually stepped into the explosions. To him, these detonating pearls could do nothing more than inflict flesh wounds. His right hand clenched into a fist and he sent out a punch.

BOOM!

Xiao Luo let out a miserable shriek. Blood sprayed from his mouth as he tumbled backward. In the blink of an eye, Meng Hao was on him again, slamming out with an attack that could shatter rock. Xiao Luo once again fell back, blood pouring from his mouth.

In the blink of an eye, ten more exchanges were made. Meng Hao's shocking energy and will of invincibility made it so that all Xiao Luo could do was fall back and focus all of his energy on defending himself. He wasn't the slightest bit capable of attacking.

Meng Hao's moves were just too swift and too vicious. Booms echoed out in the short span of a few breaths that to Xiao Luo, seemed like a very, very long time. Then, a cracking sound rang out as his leg was broken by Meng Hao.

Intense pain caused his face to go pale. A look of complete astonishment could be seen on his face.

"Dammit," he thought, "I can't let him build up any more energy. Otherwise, I'm going to be defeated for sure!"

The crowds outside watched the semifinal qualification rounds with intense concentration. Many were focusing on Meng Hao, and were completely astonished by what they saw.

"If I were in Xiao Luo's place, I would be just as powerless!"

"This Fang Mu is completely domineering! His attacks are swift and fierce; he's totally incomparable!!"

"You definitely can't let yourself be put on the defensive when facing Fang Mu. Doing that... is just giving him a chance to explode with ferocity and turn the battle into a catastrophe!"

Xiao Luo gritted his teeth, and a look of madness appeared on his face. Roaring, he caused bursts of Yin qi to explode out, which formed into numerous ghostly figures. Just as he was going to attempt to make a counterattack, Meng Hao's fist landed again. All of Xiao Luo's qi collapsed, and he was sent flying backward like a kite with its string cut, blood

spurting from his mouth.

Then, with indescribable speed, Meng Hao shot toward Xiao Luo and extended his finger toward his forehead, killing intent roiling.

Xiao Luo's eyes went wide, and his heart was trembling. In this moment of deadly crisis, he bit the tip of his tongue, burning some of his Essence Blood and longevity to unleash a forbidden magic.

"Time to risk it all," he cried. "YIN MOON SEVERING!"

A crescent moon appeared on his forehead, which rapidly transformed into a black-colored moon that shot toward Meng Hao in a slashing motion.

Meng Hao's eyes widened as the moon closed in on him. Suddenly, his Dharma Idol appeared behind him, and its fist shot out to meet the incoming Yin Moon.

A huge boom could be heard, and a tremor ran through Meng Hao as the Yin Moon exploded. Blood oozed out of Xiao Luo's mouth, but he used the short moment of freedom to shoot backward. Face twisted with unprecedented bitterness, he let out a shout.

"Nine Corpses Demon Transformation!" he cried. Immediately, the nine corpses that had continuously been behind Meng Hao and unable to even touch him, began to tremble violently. In the blink of an eye, long black fur began to grow out of their bodies, and their appearance became even more ferocious than before. Furthermore, Demonic qi began to surge within them, although that was something nobody would be able to detect.

As the Demonic qi surged, the nine corpses' cultivation bases began to rise dramatically. In the blink of an eye, they were comparable to false Immortals!!

Nine false Immortals!!

This was Xiao Luo's trump card that he had originally hoped to use to secure first place. It was not something he would casually unleash, but he had been forced into a corner, and therefore, in the frenzy of this fight, he didn't hesitate at all.

“DIE!” he roared as the nine false Immortal corpses bore down on Meng Hao. One by one, they began to lash out with astonishing attacks that caused the crowds out in the Ninth Mountain to reel in shock.

“Heavens! That’s false Immortal energy!!”

“What magical technique is that!? He actually gave those nine corpses the powers of false Immortality!!”

“Xiao Luo didn’t even use that divine ability in his fight with Fan Dong’er!”

As the outside crowds were in a commotion, the nine corpses closed in on Meng Hao, bursting with explosive energy. As for Meng Hao, an odd expression could be seen on his face.

“Demons....” he thought, his facial expression quickly returning to normal. His right hand suddenly rose into the air, and he performed an incantation gesture. The art of Righteous Bestowal was unleashed. This art was different than the Eighth Hex, and was designed specifically for subduing Demons!

No one got any special feeling when Meng Hao unleashed the art. However, as soon as his hand lowered, the nine corpses suddenly stopped in place and began to tremble. Their previously blank eyes then began to glow with bright light.

Xiao Luo’s face fell completely, and he retreated in astonishment, frantically performing incantation gestures in an attempt to regain control of the nine corpses.

However, it was at this point that Meng Hao extended his right hand. A strange light could be seen in his eyes as, under the cover of the transformative powers of the black feather, he unleashed the Seventh Demon Sealing Hex, Karmic Hexing!

Rumbling filled the air as the Karma threads connecting the nine corpses to Xiao Luo began to separate. As that happened, the corpses trembled even more violently, and explosive death auras radiated out of them. Then they toppled over onto their faces.

Xiao Luo was trembling, and he coughed up nine successive mouthfuls of blood. From the look on his face, he was completely gobsmacked. He stared at Meng Hao for a moment, shaking violently.

"I concede!" he yelled, fearful of losing his life in this place.

As soon as the words left his mouth, he was surrounded by flickering lights, and then vanished.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he picked up his spear and walked off to the side.

He stood there, his energy surging, the focus of attention of all eyes in the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

"Three fights, three wins!!"

"There's one more fight, but Fang Mu is definitely in the semifinals!"

"Not even Xiao Luo was a match for him. From the look of things, Fang Mu hasn't even used all of his power yet. Just... how strong is he?!?!"

# Chapter 876: Four Battles, Four Victories!

When Meng Hao attacked, the white-robed woman floating in midair outside of the Dao Tree looked at him calmly for a moment, although no onlooker would notice that fact, not even Meng Hao.

Xiao Luo reappeared on another leaf, his entire body shaking as he looked back at Meng Hao with terror and astonishment. Before their battle, he had been aware that Meng Hao was powerful, but he had never imagined that he would only be able to defend and would be completely incapable of fighting back against him.

He had even burned some of his longevity and used his Nine Corpses Demon Transformation, explosively increasing their cultivation bases to be similar to false Immortals. And yet, his opponent had then unleashed some unknown divine ability... to cause his nine corpses to stop in mid-flight, and even sever their connection to him.

As he thought about it, Xiao Luo took a deep breath. This was the first time he had ever truly been afraid of another person.

"He's somebody I can't ever provoke! If I ever meet him again, I'll simply flee! His magical technique... can inhibit my Dao!" Xiao Luo took another deep breath as he looked at Meng Hao. Intense terror filled his heart, and he rejoiced at his decision to concede when he did. If he hadn't, he himself might be a corpse now.

Almost in the same moment that Meng Hao finished his match, Zhao Yifan also secured another victory. After that... the fourth battle began.

Meng Hao stood as usual on his leaf. From the very beginning to now, he had not moved to the losers bracket. There was only one other among the top 4 who had done the same, and that was Zhao Yifan!

Even Fan Dong'er had been defeated, by none other than Xie Yixian from the Burning Incense Stick Society.

That match garnered quite a bit of attention, and caused Xie Yixian to suddenly rise up abruptly in the eyes of the onlookers.

The bizarre Qian Duoduo ended up being defeated by Li Ling'er, whose magical techniques were somewhat effective at counteracting the old man. However, in the very end, it was actually difficult to say who won and who lost. Li Ling'er earned her victory mostly due to luck.

As of this moment, Meng Hao and Zhao Yifan were certain to enter the semifinals, but as for everyone else, it was hard to say.

Meng Hao's opponent in the fourth battle was the Chosen who had beaten Fan Dong'er, Xie Yixian from the Burning Incense Stick Society. As soon as he emerged from the glittering light to stand in front of Meng Hao, his eyes gleamed seriously.

Of all the people who made it to the top 8, he truly feared three of them. One was the spectacular Zhao Yifan, the other was the talkative Qian Duoduo, and the last... was none other than this Fang Mu.

"I am Xie Yixian from the Burning Incense Stick Society. Fellow Daoist Fang, please give me some fighting tips!"

Having said this, Xie Yixian suddenly sat down cross-legged and performed an incantation gesture with his right hand. Immediately, a copper furnace appeared in front of him.

Stuck into the very top of the copper furnace was an incense stick.

As the incense stick burned, streams of smoke curled up into the air to surround Xie Yixian, obscuring him slightly.

"Fellow Daoist Fang, my magical technique is different from the kind you've seen before. If you can stand up to it for the amount of time it takes this incense stick to burn, then I will concede."

Meng Hao stood in place, his expression the same as ever. He had been paying close attention to how Xie Yixian fought. Right now, Meng Hao didn't even speak. He took a step forward, and then suddenly, everything around him distorted, and in the blink of an eye, the arena was gone. In its place, a boundless land stretched in front of Meng Hao.

Countless cities could be seen dotting the land, and within each one was an enormous statue. If you looked closely, you would see that the statues

depicted none other than Xie Yixian.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered.

At this point, a majestic voice rang out throughout the world.

"The Heavens are grand, the Earth majestic!" As soon as the voice echoed out, the statues of Xie Yixian trembled and opened their eyes, almost as if they were coming to life. They flew up into the air, a total of 9,000 of them, which then began to circulate around Meng Hao and emanate radiant light. In a short moment, the statues merged together into one.

They became... a lifelike Xie Yixian.

He hovered there in midair, smiling slightly at Meng Hao.

"The Heavens are grand, and the Earth is majestic, but the greatest of all is the host of all living things!

"Living things possess desire. Desire becomes thought. Thought becomes burning incense. Worship the gods, pray for their blessing. Through the cultivation of this burning incense, if they worship me, then I am a god! If they pray to me, I am a god!"

"This place is my Burning Incense World. Here... I am a god, and in this place, I cannot be defeated!

"If I say that a single breath will last for ten thousand years, then ten thousand years that breath shall last!

"Fellow Daoist Fang, you have a monstrous cultivation base, and shocking divine sense. Willpower and determination like yours is something I rarely see. Why not become my follower here? Become part of my Burning Incense Flock. Cultivate the Dao of burning incense. Then one day, you too can be a god." Xie Yixian's words were spoken indifferently, but seemed to contain a bizarre power. As they echoed out into Meng Hao's ears, he felt his mind trembling, as if there was something within the word that made them impossible to resist, and that was forcing him to comply.

"If I become part of your Burning Incense Flock, how many spirit stones will you pay me per month?" asked Meng Hao coolly.

As soon as the words left his mouth, Xie Yixian gaped. After a moment, though, he laughed loudly, then waved his hand. A massive roaring could be heard that transformed into a continent of spirit stones. All of the mountains, cities, even the vegetation, turned into spirit stones.

In the blink of an eye, the entire world transformed into endless, uncountable spirit stones.

"You can have however many you wish."

Meng Hao looked around and then shook his head. "I don't want these. I want real spirit stones, in the outside world."

Xie Yixian's face darkened, and he gave a cold snort. The sound started out light, but then rapidly turned into something that sounded like thunder, echoing out with incredible pressure. It was like Heavenly might that crushed down onto Meng Hao.

"Kneel before me!" said Xie Yixian. His voice echoed out shockingly, filled with a will that seemed almost impossible to resist.

Meng Hao looked up, his expression the same as ever.

"That's all the pressure you can exert?" he asked. Suddenly, he transformed into a vulture that shot toward Xie Yixian. A boom rang out as Xie Yixian's body collapsed. A moment later, he reappeared some distance off.

"My life force is limitless in this place," he said coolly. "You can't kill me!" He raised his right hand, coalescing the power of the world into a huge palm that shot toward Meng Hao.

Energy raged, and boundless pressure emanated out.

"Can't kill him?" thought Meng Hao, frowning. "Is that because the magic is an illusion? Or because I haven't affected the essence of his life force?" He extended his right hand and made a grasping gesture. Instantly the Blood Demon Grand Magic surged into action. An enormous blood-

colored vortex appeared, which spread out to cover Xie Yixian, enveloping him completely.

A boom rang out as his body collapsed into pieces. At the same time, another image of him appeared off to the side. But this time, his face was pale and filled with astonishment.

“What magical technique is that?!?”

“Ah, so it was because the essence of his life force hadn’t been affected.” Meng Hao smiled, and then suddenly, his hand turned bright red. He immediately flew out, closing in on Xie Yixian. Even as the young man stared in shock, Meng Hao slapped out with his palm.

A bang could be heard as Xie Yixian once again collapsed into pieces. Actually, his battle prowess wasn’t very high to begin with. What was truly shocking was his magical technique. Unfortunately, that magic wasn’t very useful on Meng Hao.

In the past, whenever someone killed him in this world, he would come back to life. It could happen over and over again, without end, leaving opponents completely dispirited.

Now, though, every time he died, some of his life force was actually drained away. It was something that had never happened to him before, and in his shock, he tried to evade Meng Hao. However, he was no match at all. Were it not for the magical technique he was using, Meng Hao could have killed him numerous times in the blink of an eye.

Rumbling echoed out. Every time Xie Yixian died, one of his statues would shatter. Every time Xie Yixian reappeared, his face was covered with astonishment, and he would instantly fall into retreat.

“Elder Brother Fang, stop! I’ll let you out, you can leave....”

“You don’t need to let me out,” Meng Hao replied calmly, “I can get out on my own.” With that, he slammed his foot down onto the surface of the ground. A huge boom could be heard as his Dharma Idol appeared, towering 300 meters into the air, its energy surging.

Xie Yixian’s face flickered, and he was just about to say something else

when Meng Hao suddenly stamped his foot down again. Rumbling could be heard as his Dharma Idol rapidly grew in size. Now it was 3,000 meters tall!

Monstrous energy surged, and the power of a true Immortal erupted out. Xie Yixian's face instantly fell as Meng Hao stamped down a third time.

BOOM!

Meng Hao's Dharma Idol grew again. In the blink of an eye it was now 6,000 meters tall, seemingly big enough to prop up the sky.

"Tear this place open!" said Meng Hao, his eyes flickering with killing intent. As he spoke, he raised both hands high into the air, then slammed them down. Rumbling filled the air as his Dharma Idol also raised its hands up, grabbed ahold of the air, and then began to rip it in two different directions.

Massive, shocking rumbles echoed out. Xie Yixian's face flickered as he performed incantation gestures, causing the world to begin to rotate and stabilize. However, despite his efforts, a massive rift appeared in the sky.

The world was actually being ripped apart!

"Impossible!" shouted Xie Yixian. "This is my Burning Incense World! I am God here! Maybe you can hurt my life force, but if I say that nothing can destroy this land, then no power exists that can do so!"

"I'm afraid your cultivation base is simply... not high enough," said Meng Hao, his voice cool. He stamped his foot down onto the ground a fourth time, and his cultivation base surged with eighty percent of an Immortal meridian, and eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal. His Dharma Idol grew again; it was now 12,000 meters tall. It lifted its hands up, then violently ripped at the sky. The earth quaked and bright colors flashed in the sky. A massive rumbling sound echoed out.

The rift in the sky opened wider, and an enormous rumbling sound filled the air. Meng Hao's Dharma Idol was literally tearing the sky open!

As the sky was ripped open, the entire world, as well as Xie Yixian, suddenly shattered. When things grew clear again, Meng Hao was

standing in the same place as before in the arena. Xie Yixian was there in front of him. Only about ten percent of the incense stick in front of him had burned so far. A cracking sound rang out as the incense stick suddenly collapsed into pieces.

When that happened, the smoke dissipated, revealing Xie Yixian sitting there cross-legged. He opened his eyes and coughed up a mouthful of blood. Face pale, he looked at Meng Hao and smiled bitterly.

“Elder Brother Fang, you are quite powerful... I concede!”

Even as the words left his mouth, he coughed up another mouthful of blood. Suddenly, a rip appeared on his forehead, a wound that seemed very difficult to heal. It was a Dao Wound!

The cause of the wound was none other than the tearing open of his Burning Incense World.

This fight had been a very strange one. From start to finish, barely a hundred breaths of time had passed, and all the other matches were still in progress. The audiences in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were instantly in an uproar.

“Four battles, four victories!!”

“The last battle seemed ordinary, but actually, the disciple from the Burning Incense Stick Society was in grave peril!”

“A tear appeared on Xie Yixian’s forehead! I heard that if the magic of the Burning Incense Stick Society is broken, it can cause a backlash that will turn into a Dao Wound! Don’t tell me... that’s a Dao Wound!”

# Chapter 877: Unleashed!

Everyone watching in the Ninth Mountain and Sea was stunned. Even the Patriarchs in the starry sky palace were looking on with surprise. It was clear that the most-watched person in this trial by fire and these arena matches was Meng Hao.

From the beginning of the trial by fire, all the way to the end of the arena matches, his path had been one of power and prominence.

The qualifying matches for the semifinals were still underway. After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, Zhao Yifan finished his battle. He easily defeated Xiao Luo from the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum, who had long since lost his will to fight. His connection with his nine most powerful corpses had been severed, making it impossible for him to fight for a spot in the semifinals.

Zhao Yifan was now the second cultivator to secure a place in the semifinals. Throughout all four of the battles he had fought, he never left his arena. He looked over at Meng Hao, who was two arenas over, and their gazes locked for a moment. Zhao Yifan's eyes brimmed with the desire to fight, but Meng Hao's expression was calm, and after a moment, he looked away.

An hour later, the other two battles concluded. Li Ling'er, with four battles and three victories, had successfully made it to the semifinals.

Li Ling'er had made quite the comeback. She fought her way from the bottom four into the semifinals, which caused a big stir out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, especially in the Li Clan, where everyone was very excited.

Qian Duoduo had also won three out of his four battles. His only defeat had been at the hands of Li Ling'er. All of his other opponents had temporarily gone insane to some degree or another. Only Li Ling'er did not react to his magic at all, which secured her victory.

Fan Dong'er was eliminated. She had been defeated twice, once by Xie Yixian from the Burning Incense Stick Society, and once by Li Ling'er. All

of this was a huge blow to her.

Her expression was gloomy as she sat there cross-legged on the lowest layer of leaves, staring off into the distance. Mentally, she replayed the various battles she had fought, and finally bowed her head. As of now, she understood that the reason for her failures was that her Dao Heart had been split.

That split was caused by the female corpse.

She took a deep breath, after which her expression brightened.

"This is my personal tribulation," she thought. "However, master said that it's actually good fortune for me. Therefore... from now on, I won't hide the corpse. I will reveal her for all to see, and will not resist her, but accept her!" As of that moment, the mist behind her vanished to clearly reveal the female corpse.

She completely ignored all the people who suddenly turned their heads to look at her. Her eyes gleamed with determination.

In the starry sky palace, the Patriarch from the Ninth Sea God World nodded his head slightly. From his perspective, this huge defeat for Fan Dong'er was actually a good thing for her.

The semifinalists had been selected!

These four people were the subject of the complete and utter attention of everyone in the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Ling Yunzi glanced cautiously over at the white robed woman floating above the Dao Tree, and then spoke out.

"You have three days to rest, after which... we will find out who is qualified to make into the final round!"

Meng Hao sat there cross-legged, his eyes closed, not speaking. The half-headed man had remained floating near his arena this entire time, staring at Meng Hao, not even blinking.

That gaze was enough to cause anyone to feel so terrified that their hair would stand on end. However, after all this time, Meng Hao had gotten

used to it, and ignored the man completely.

A day later, the Nascent Soul and Spirit Severing arena matches produced their semifinalists.

Three days later, the semifinal rounds began!

When Ling Yunzi's voice rang out, a buzz of excitement rose up among the spectators in the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

"There's no suspense at all! Unless Fang Mu and Zhao Yifan fight each other in the semifinals, then the final match will definitely be between them!"

"You're absolutely right. Li Ling'er already lost to Fang Mu, so the only person for him to fight is Qian Duoduo. Qian Duoduo's cultivation base is mysterious and unfathomable. That would be an interesting matchup."

"Well, we'll just have to wait and see how the matches are arranged!"

As the audiences waited in anticipation, Meng Hao vanished from his spot in the arena. Before he or any of the other semifinalists reappeared, a virtually imperceptible flicker could be seen in the eyes of the woman floating outside the Dao Tree. Apparently, that flickering did something to the Dao Tree.

Moments later, everyone appeared.

When Meng Hao emerged from the light, he was just beneath the golden leaf at the top of the Dao Tree.

The leaf he currently stood on was silver-colored, one of only two such leaves on the Dao Tree.

When Zhao Yifan appeared, the person he found facing him... was not Meng Hao! Instead, Li Ling'er emerged from the glittering light.

As for Meng Hao's opponent, it was the crazy old man, Qian Duoduo.

These were the exact match ups that the audiences in the outside world had wanted, and the excitement and anticipation was building. Of course, the Patriarchs in the starry sky palace noticed that something odd had just happened, and many faces flickered. The old men from the Three Great

Daoist Societies took deep breaths, and looks of excitement appeared in their eyes.

“So, she actually did something to interfere with the Dao Tree!”

“That shows that she approves of the competition!!”

Back in the arena, Meng Hao’s face was calm as he watched Qian Duoduo approaching. In this group of semifinalists, Meng Hao and Qian Duoduo had both risen up from through the trial by fire to reach this point.

Qian Duoduo looked at Meng Hao silently for a moment, and a bright light could be seen coalescing within his eyes. His energy began to rise up, reaching a level far beyond that which had been seen in previous matches.

Not even when he was defeated by Li Ling’er had he focused so much energy.

“I am Qian Duoduo. Greetings, Fellow Daoist Fang. During this battle, I will use all the power I can muster. I want to take first place, and my only chance to do that is by defeating you!”

Meng Hao gazed at Qian Duoduo. He had been paying attention to this old man earlier. The fact that he had made his way through the trial by fire all the way to here proved that he was beyond ordinary.

That was especially the case considering he had won a victory over Xie Yixian. Although Meng Hao had seemed relaxed in his fight against Xie Yixian, if he didn’t have the Blood Demon Grand Magic to steal the young man’s life force, the battle would have been very difficult. Of course, based on the power of Meng Hao’s cultivation base, the Burning Incense World would not have been able to restrain him forever.

In any case, Meng Hao wasn’t sure exactly how this old man had managed to win out over the Burning Incense World.

“Every person who fought him went crazy,” he thought. “Even Xie Yixian and the other people he defeated all showed signs of insanity to some extent or another.” Meng Hao’s eyes glittered brightly. “Interesting.”

Clenching his right fist at his side, he nodded at the old man.

Qian Duoduo took a deep breath, and then all of a sudden, his body began to inflate like a balloon. Cracking sounds could be heard as his emaciated frame suddenly bulged with muscles. In the blink of an eye, he had grown taller by two heads, and his energy surged with power.

The sight of it caused Meng Hao's eyes to shine. The audiences in the outside world were shocked; Qian Duoduo had never done anything like this in his previous matches, not even when he fought against Li Ling'er.

Rumble!

Qian Duoduo flew into the air with incredible speed, leaving a ghost image behind as he shot forward to appear directly in front of Meng Hao. He immediately sent out a punch that was met by Meng Hao's palm.

As a massive boom shook the arena, Qian Duoduo's foot spun through the air toward Meng Hao in a roundhouse kick.

Meng Hao's eyes were shining even more brightly now. He didn't retreat, but rather took an exploratory step forward. He waved his hand, causing numerous streams of water to materialize around him, which then formed together into a massive river that swept across the entire arena.

A bang rang out as Qian Duoduo fell back. However, he immediately performed an incantation gesture, causing the image of a sun and moon to materialize. They rotated rapidly, creating a vortex that surged toward Meng Hao. Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he transformed into a vulture that charged toward the old man. It was at this point that a look of surprise appeared in Qian Duoduo's eyes, and he suddenly let out a loud shout.

"Wicked!"

The word seemed to contain some bizarre power that poured into Meng Hao's ears and entered his mind. Suddenly, his mind began to spin, and wicked thoughts suddenly rose up unrestrained within his heart.

Because of the wicked thoughts, Meng Hao was incapable of maintaining the vulture form, and once again returned to human shape.

Qian Duoduo then performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and then waved his finger. Meng Hao snorted coldly and was about to attack when...

"WICKED!" roared Qian Duoduo.

This time, the sound was like a thunderclap that exploded in Meng Hao's mind. Wicked thoughts multiplied in him with an unbridled frenzy. He was incapable of controlling the thoughts, which filled him with a sensation of insanity.

Gradually, Meng Hao realized that the Devilish will that he had severed during his time of Severing the Devil and Seeking the Dao... was now reappearing. In the blink of an eye, the Devilish will consumed the wicked thoughts. Apparently, the Devilish will had been inside of him all along, hiding deep inside of him, sealed away.

Now, in response to Qian Duoduo's astonishing magical technique, the Devilish will was forming once again!

In the blink of an eye, Meng Hao and Qian Duoduo exchanged dozens of moves. Qian Duoduo ended up calling out the word 'wicked' six times. Each time, it caused Meng Hao's magical techniques and attacks to be interrupted. For the first time in all of his arena matches, Meng Hao was now forced into constant retreat.

Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth, and his eyes were bloodshot. A terrifying aura seemed to be on the verge of being unleashed from inside of him. Qian Duoduo was the one responsible for releasing the Devilish will, although he actually had no idea what he was unleashing. Despite not knowing what he was dealing with, he was still very excited, and continued to unleash monstrous attacks.

When the crowds out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea saw what was happening, their expressions flickered in astonishment.

"Fang Mu is actually being beaten back!!"

"Just what magical technique is Qian Duoduo using to be able to stifle Fang Mu?!"

“Could it be that Fang Mu will finally be defeated!?!?”

As the audiences buzzed in astonishment, Qian Duoduo attacked relentlessly, causing repeated booms to echo about. Meng Hao’s face was pale, and his eyes were completely bloodshot, as if he were on the verge of going insane. Blood oozed out of his mouth, and yet, a faint grin suddenly blossomed on his face.

“You’re finished!” Qian Duoduo transmitted into Meng Hao’s mind, so that only he could hear. “My magic can steal good fortune from Heaven and Earth! It doesn’t matter how strong your willpower is, if you have even a scrap of wicked thoughts in your heart, they will be evoked by my magic!

“When the wicked thoughts explode out, they will cast your body into flames, and you will be defeated!

“I must use this art on you in order to secure my chance at taking first place. I’ve been holding back this entire time, and I even let myself be defeated by Li Ling’er because I was sure I would make it into the semifinals, and I didn’t want you or Zhao Yifan to be on guard..

“The only thing you can blame is your own bad luck, since you’re letting Zhao Yifan off the hook by giving him a chance to prepare some defenses!

“I will unleash all of your wicked thoughts, transforming them into a fire of retribution to burn your soul, to destroy you in body and spirit!

“WICKED!” he roared, performing an incantation gesture and pointing at Meng Hao. This was... the ninth ‘wicked!’

As soon as the words left his mouth, the Devilish will inside of Meng Hao surged and was completely unleashed. His eyes were bright red as he was wrapped up in a gloomy, ruthless madness. Deep within that madness, was an unprecedented coldness.

Black flames leapt from his skin and raged madly high into the sky. However, the flames didn’t hurt Meng Hao in the least. He looked up at Qian Duoduo, and a rumbling filled the old man’s mind. His face instantly fell.

“These aren’t wicked thoughts! What... what exactly did I unleash!?!?”

# Chapter 878: Eclipsing Everything

Qian Duoduo's face fell, and he staggered backward several paces, his face ashen and his eyes wide. An intense sense of deadly crisis crashed through him.

"What exactly did I unleash!?!?" said Qian Duoduo hoarsely. "These aren't wicked thoughts! Wicked thoughts would form fires of retribution, a fire that can burn a person up in moments, destroy them in body and spirit!"

"This... this feeling, this aura, even the black flames of retribution are incapable of burning it. This will... is so powerful that it's suffocating!!" As Qian Duoduo backed up, his heart filled with incredible regret. Were he given another chance, nothing could have convinced him to unleash whatever it was he had just unleashed.

He had the feeling that he had opened a sluice gate, unleashing a horrific Devil.

The spectators out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were all astonished at the sight of Meng Hao on the vortex screens, covered with black flames that seemed completely incapable of harming him whatsoever.

Meng Hao's red eyes seemed to be filled with the utmost insanity, and yet... they were also unshakably level-headed. Furthermore, his energy was rocketing higher and higher.

"He... he...."

"What state is he in? What technique does he cultivate? Why did he instantly become so blood-chillingly terrifying?"

"Devil! Heavens! It's a Devilish will! A monstrous Devilish will! Only someone who has carried out endless slaughter, who is cold and ruthless to a Heaven-defying extent, could possibly have a Devilish will like that!"

In the starry sky palace, the Patriarchs were all on their feet, panting and watching with serious expressions.

"What a shocking Devilish will! But earlier, he seemed completely

normal! This kid... this kid has shocking willpower!"

"A Devilish will like that can never be fully expelled, nor completely severed! It will even accompany him through reincarnation!"

"From ancient times until now, anyone who possessed a Devilish will like that has ended up facing countless deadly twists and turns throughout their lives!!"

Up above the Dao Tree, the white-robed woman had floated there absolutely expressionlessly for this entire time. However, as of this moment, her eyes began to shine with a curious light as she looked at Meng Hao.

As for Qian Duoduo, he hadn't ceased backing up, and was trembling with fear. His scalp was numb and he was scared witless. Meng Hao hadn't even attacked yet, but the energy of the Devilish will and the fire of retribution had astonished Qian Duoduo to the extreme. The sensation of blood and gore, the towering murderous aura, left him shaking in his boots. He almost felt like what he was looking at was not a cultivator, but mountains of corpses and seas of blood, an evil star risen up from the Yellow Springs.

"I conc—" Before he could even finish speaking the words, Meng Hao's eyes turned to look directly at him.

Those eyes were like oceans of blood, with pupils that emanated brilliant rays of eternal light that seemed capable of absorbing the soul.

As soon as their gazes met, Qian Duoduo's mind roared, and felt as if it were about to explode. His body trembled, and he felt as if sharp blades were piercing into his eyes, stabbing into his soul. They exploded inside of his brain, transforming into a battlefield covered with mountains of corpses and seas of blood. He saw a person on the battlefield, surrounded by a vortex. Wherever that man went, countless cultivators let out bloodcurdling screams as their bodies were withered up, their flesh and blood was absorbed, their souls were consumed. In the end, the only things left behind were desiccated corpses staring wide-eyed up into the sky.

Qian Duoduo coughed up a mouthful of blood, and then, suddenly his vision cleared and he saw that Meng Hao had appeared directly in front of him, covered with raging black flames. Meng Hao lifted his right hand and grabbed the old man's neck, then lifted him up into the air. His eyes burned with cold madness, and his mouth twisted into a brutal smile.

"Thank you. This feeling is... wonderful. It's too bad that this state doesn't conform with my Dao Heart. I thought I had completely severed it away, and never imagined that it still existed....

"In any case, I still have to thank you for helping me to realize that it was here all along. And now... I will give you a grand burial ceremony!" Meng Hao chuckled, and Qian Duoduo's eyes went wide. He was currently incapable of speaking a single word, and was trembling violently. Within his wide eyes could be seen extreme terror.

As soon as Meng Hao finished speaking, the black flames that surrounded him surged up, transforming into the shape of a huge mouth. The mouth twisted with savagery and insanity as it shot toward Qian Duoduo.

It took only a moment for the black flames to inundate him. He let out a miserable shriek that didn't even sound human. The wretched sound echoed about in all directions, causing all of the cultivators on the Dao Tree to feel not only shock, but sympathy. Then they began to shiver.

Li Ling'er's face went pale when she saw what was happening. Even she began to shiver from the intensely terrifying feeling she got from Meng Hao.

Zhao Yifan's face was covered with an expression of intense concentration as he looked over. Both he and Li Ling'er were panting.

Qian Duoduo screamed as his body rapidly withered. As he slipped into death, he gazed blankly at Meng Hao, and his mind filled with intense regret. He knew that he should never have unleashed wicked thoughts inside of his opponent. In the end, he had personally... unleashed a Devil!

In the space of only a few breaths of time, Qian Duoduo transformed into nothing but drifting ash.

Meng Hao lowered his hand, and the flames winked out, transforming into black sealing marks that were visible on his skin. As he stood there, his energy raged.

At this point, he suddenly flew up out of the arena and landed on the golden leaf at the top of the Dao Tree, then turned and looked back at Zhao Yifan.

“Zhao Yifan, you wanted to fight me, didn’t you? Well, come on!”

The half-headed man who was watching Meng Hao apparently sensed the Devilish will, after which he trembled almost imperceptibly. Apparently, even he was in fear of the Devilish will.

A tremor ran through Zhao Yifan as he looked up at Meng Hao. A very serious expression covered his face, and his eyes burned with the desire to fight. Completely ignoring Li Ling’er, he also flew up into the air and landed in front of Meng Hao on the golden leaf.

He reached his right hand out, and suddenly, an azure sword appeared.

The sword was two meters long, and glittered with greenish light, as well as a coldness as vast as a sea. Zhao Yifan looked at Meng Hao, then raised the sword and slashed toward him like an arrow loosed from a bow.

The sword caused the air to vibrate, and wild colors to flash about. Intense coldness surged out in all directions, and dragon-like sword qi formed together into the shape of an Azure Dragon. The Azure Dragon had vicious claws that slashed the air into pieces, and long whiskers that shattered its surroundings. Rumbling filled the air as the dragon shot toward Meng Hao. The entire arena quaked, and the air was ripped apart. It almost seemed as if this Azure Dragon could smash through any and all obstacles in its path.

In the blink of an eye, it was directly in front of Meng Hao. In the moment before it impacted, Meng Hao’s expression was cold, and his eyes were bloodshot. Unexpectedly, he did nothing to avoid it, but instead, lifted his hand up and pushed it out toward the dragon.

Massive rumbling could be heard as beams of sword qi rapidly expanded

out in all directions, transforming into an arcing barrier formed of ten thousand swords. Meng Hao's hair whipped about him... as he stood there unmoving, using only that one hand movement to send sword qi out in defense.

It was as if his one hand could eclipse everything!

Everyone looked on with astonishment at this final, decisive battle!!

In the starry sky palace, the Patriarchs were also watching with full concentration.

The decisive battle had begun too quickly. As of this moment, everyone in the Dao Tree now served as foils to Meng Hao and Zhao Yifan, who were the complete center of attention.

Meng Hao gazed coldly at Zhao Yifan, and slowly clenched his hand into a fist. As he did, the arcing barrier that had spread out began to emit cracking noises, and then suddenly shrank down.

As it shrank, the Azure Dragon within it struggled, but to no avail. Meng Hao's hand closed into a fist.

Boom!

The sword qi obstacle shattered, and the Azure Dragon collapsed into pieces and then exploded. The sword attack vanished, and all that remained behind to show for it was a white mark on Meng Hao's palm. It seemed like it should have been a wound, but in the blink of an eye, it was healed, and the mark vanished.

This development was noticed by the audiences in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, and they were astonished.

"He has regenerative powers!!"

"He used a single hand to block Zhao Yifan's sword, and all it did was cut him a little! Heavens! He already recovered!"

"This is Fang Mu's true power! Before, he was concealing his cultivation base!!"

As the crowds were in an uproar, the Patriarchs in the starry sky palace

were panting, and staring fixedly at the image of Meng Hao on the screens.

“That must be... an Eternal stratum!!”

“He actually possesses the Eternal stratum of legend!”

“With a stratum like that, he can be considered invincible to his peers!!”

Meanwhile, outside of Planet East Victory, Patriarch Reliance was staring blankly at the vortex screen, eyes wide. He began to pant, and then moments later, started muttering curses.

“Little bastard, I can’t believe he has an Eternal stratum!!”

Another strange gleam appeared in the eyes of the white robed woman floating above the Dao Tree as she looked at Meng Hao.

At the same time, outside of the arena where Meng Hao stood, the half-headed man hovered there, motionless. However, his one remaining eye stared dead at Meng Hao, glowing with what seemed to be avarice.

Zhao Yifan’s face flickered, and he took a deep breath. His Dharma Idol suddenly appeared behind him, and the image it depicted was of himself!

It was an enormous giant, 3,000 meters tall, that radiated shocking energy.

In order to have a Dharma Idol like this, one had to possess one’s own power of true Immortality, at least sixty to seventy percent. Back in the Southern Domain, Zhao Yifan had been strong, but not this strong. In fact, it was even possible to just barely see some sort of glowing vine on the Dharma Idol!

It was... an Immortality Illumination Vine!!

“Heavens! Zhao Yifan is actually engaging in battle at the same time as he’s using an Immortality Illumination Vine! Most other people would be in secluded meditation right now, but he dares to come out and fight!!”

“Is he using battle to contemplate enlightenment? Using a duel to illuminate Immortality and open his path to true Immortality? This Zhao Yifan definitely deserves his reputation as one of the two most powerful

successors to have appeared in years in the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto!"

Even more shocking was that his Dharma Idol gripped a mighty longsword, upon which were inscribed two characters.

Cloud Sealing!

The words were somewhat indistinct, but everyone could see them.

As soon as people caught sight of the two characters, everyone was sent into an uproar.

"A Cloud Sealing Sword! His Dharma Idol actually produced a Cloud Sealing Sword!"

"The Sublime Flow Sword Grotto has three types of divine swords, and the Cloud Sealing Sword is one of them! They are swords which don't exist in reality, but can only be summoned by cultivating Daoist magic from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto. There are only a few Chosen who have the magical techniques and divine abilities to do it."

"But... but for the sword to appear in the hands of a Dharma Idol is completely unheard-of! Doesn't that mean that he can use any magical technique and divine ability he wants, and still unleash the power of that Cloud Sealing Sword at the same time!?"

# Chapter 879: Peak Battle!

Zhao Yifan suddenly looked up at Meng Hao, and his eyes overflowed with the desire to fight. Before his trip to Planet South Heaven, there had only been two people of his same generation who filled him with such a desire to fight.

After Planet South Heaven, there was another, Meng Hao. And now... yet another, Fang Mu.

Monstrous fighting desire raged inside of him. Behind him, his 3,000-meter Dharma Idol held the Cloud Sealing Sword, and was radiating shocking sword qi. As Zhao Yifan raised his head, he also lifted up his hand. Simultaneously, his Dharma Idol raised the Cloud Sealing Sword.

“First Sword, Incarnating the Divine!” cried Zhao Yifan, and the sword descended!

The sword did not transform into an Azure Dragon, but rather, a green beam of light that instantly caused the entire golden arena to quake. A huge rift was ripped open in the air, and a massive rumbling sound echoed out. Wild colors flashed, and the heavenly bodies shook. Radiating a monstrous will, it shot toward Meng Hao, seemingly incapable of being blocked.

Almost as soon as the first sword descended, Zhao Yifan’s energy surged upward, and in the midst of the already intense power, more explosive power appeared. Zhao Yifan swept forward like a whirlwind, and then gave a piercing shout.

“Second Sword, Shocking the Spirit!”

After that, a third sword appeared.

“Third Sword, Severing the Immortal!”

This sword caused rumbling to fill the air as it followed the first two swords, splitting Heaven and Earth, surging forward invincibly!

After that, a fourth sword appeared.

“Fourth Sword, Shattering the Ancient!”

Each sword was faster than the previous sword, and more powerful. The four swords caused colors to flash, and the air to vibrate. Everything began to shake, and all the other cultivators on the Dao Tree looked on in astonishment.

The heavenly bodies seemed to grow dark, as if all the splendor of the world was being replaced by these swords.

However... Zhao Yifan wasn't finished.

“Fifth Sword, Trampling the Heavens!”

Shockingly, a fifth sword appeared. This fifth sword was far more incisive than all the previous four swords. Everyone who could see it with their own eyes felt as if they were being suffocated. The spectators out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea made a collective gasp, and the Patriarchs in the starry sky palace looked on with shining eyes.

Five swords, shocking to the extreme!

Meng Hao remained standing in his original position. Although his expression was calm, a nearly undetectable desire to fight flickered in his eyes. As the five swords descended toward him, the black sealing marks all over his body began to move, swirling across his skin. His Devilish will exploded out, distorting the air and even affecting time. To him, it seemed as if everything he was seeing was now moving in slow motion.

He didn't move, but instead lifted his hand, performed an incantation gesture, and then tapped the first sword.

A boom could be heard as black light spread out from Meng Hao's finger. The first sword, with its astonishing energy, came to a stop in front of the fingertip. A howl of rage could be heard echoing out from the sword as it suddenly transformed into millions upon millions of swords. Just when they were about to try to sidestep the power of Meng Hao's finger attack, they began to tremble, and then simply exploded. Sword qi spread out in all directions, causing the golden arena to shake violently, seemingly on the verge of collapse. Meng Hao took a step forward, then

pointed out a second time with his index finger to tap the second beam of sword qi.

A massive boom rattled out in all directions. Everything shook as the second sword collapsed in response to Meng Hao's finger attack, transforming into even more swords than had appeared just moments before, all of which then exploded.

When the spectators on the outside saw this, they were astonished. Everything was happening too quickly, giving them virtually no time to react. Meng Hao took a third step forward, right into the middle of endless sword shadows. Boundless sword qi swirled around him, and the number of swords was innumerable. It was almost as if he had entered a world of swords.

The third sword attack formed a globe of swords that began to shrink down as soon as Meng Hao stepped into it, transforming into one sword that slashed down toward him. Meng Hao's right hand lifted up, and a third finger attack was unleashed.

When it touched the third sword, a boom rattled out that shook the whole Dao Tree. A massive wind kicked up, and everything went dark for a moment. Even the mists outside of the Dao Tree began to churn.

In the midst of all the noise, the third sword attack... shattered into pieces. Everyone in the outside world watched as the sword world collapsed, and Meng Hao stepped out, his fourth step.

All of this takes some time to describe, but actually, Meng Hao's four steps took place in the space of only a few breaths. By this time, the fourth and fifth sword attacks were bearing down on him simultaneously. They were like two lightning bolts that slashed through the air, bearing monstrous sword will.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered as he raised his right hand. He waved his finger two times, once for each of the two beams of sword qi. Shocking rumbling could be heard, booms that caused everything to quake. The air surrounding the arena twisted and distorted, and even the barrier separating the Dao Tree from the outside world seemed to be affected.

The sword qi collapsed, dispersing as Meng Hao took his fifth step. By that time, he was directly in front of Zhao Yifan, whereupon his right hand stretched out in a claw.

Zhao Yifan immediately fell back, waving his arm and causing a sixth sword to appear. After that came a seventh sword, which descended toward Meng Hao amidst massive rumbling. Two beams of sword qi swept toward him, although they did nothing to prevent him from advancing.

"Seven Swords Slaughter Mount Heaven!" roared Zhao Yifan in an earth shattering voice. His Dharma Idol took a step forward, raising its right hand to lift the 300-meter Cloud Sealing Sword. In this moment, it looked incredibly realistic, as if it truly existed.

Colors flashed, and a will of invincibility exploded out as the sword descended toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao stopped in place and looked up. A vicious smile then appeared on his face, and he stamped his foot down onto the surface of the arena. Rumbling could be heard as... his own enormous Dharma Idol materialized!

When the Dharma Idol appeared, it was 3,000 meters tall, filled with shocking energy. It stepped forward and performed a double-handed incantation, then punched toward the huge sword descending from above.

From a distance, it was possible to see the two enormous Dharma Idols engaged in fierce fighting. Down on the surface of the arena, Meng Hao's body was wreathed in black flames, making him look like some sort of terrifying Devil. He advanced toward Zhao Yifan, waving his hand to cause millions of streams to appear, which then transformed into an enormous river.

Zhao Yifan's face flickered; he bit his tongue and then spit out some blood, each droplet of which transformed into an enormous sea, all of which then formed together into an even larger shocking composite sea. This was a sea that was not composed of water, but countless swords!

It was... a sea of swords!

The sea of swords immediately slammed into the massive river that was Meng Hao's Mountain Consuming Incantation. A shockwave spread out in all directions, causing everything to tremble. The dazzling light of magical techniques and divine abilities radiated out in all directions.

Meng Hao didn't stop for a moment. His body flickered as he transformed into an enormous black, flaming vulture. He whistled through the air, piercing the sea of swords to appear in front of Zhao Yifan and viciously slash razor-sharp claws at him. Zhao Yifan's face darkened as he fell back in shock. At this moment, he finally understood why all of Meng Hao's previous opponents had suffered setback after setback in combat. Now that he was experiencing the same thing himself, he truly felt terror of Meng Hao.

Meng Hao had an aura of invincibility, and he only attacked, sparing nothing for defense.

Facing this energy, one had no choice but to retreat, and by doing so, involuntarily fall into Meng Hao's rhythm of battle. Eventually, the continuous retreat would lead to one end... defeat.

Booms echoed out as over a hundred exchanges occurred between Zhao Yifan and Meng Hao. The golden arena was wracked with massive booms. As for the crowds outside in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, they watched the scene unfold with pounding hearts. The only thing they were paying attention to was the groundbreaking championship battle between Meng Hao and Zhao Yifan.

"I can't keep retreating!" thought Zhao Yifan, blood oozing out of his mouth. Suddenly, a fierce gleam appeared in his eyes as his Dharma Idol, which was currently locked in combat with Meng Hao's Dharma Idol, grew to a height of 6,000 meters, causing something like a violent windstorm to spread out across the arena.

Taking advantage of that blast of power, Zhao Yifan took a deep breath, and looked at Meng Hao with an unprecedented look of solemnity.

"Five Cleaving Swords, First Cleaving... Rising Sword Form!" As he spoke, he lifted his right hand. Sword qi began to swirl around each of his five

fingers, and his speed suddenly increased to shocking effect. He waved his hand, causing numerous beams of sword qi to shoot out.

In the blink of an eye, 100 swords appeared in the form of sword qi. Shockingly, they flew up into the air, then spun and began to fall down toward Meng Hao like a rain of swords. Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he stretched out his right hand and made a grasping motion, which caused the long spear with the World Tree shaft and the bone spearhead to appear. He immediately swept it out in front of him, causing rumbling sounds to be heard as the 100 swords were deflected and sent stabbing into the surface of the arena.

However, Zhao Yifan's divine ability was still unfolding. 1,000 swords appeared up above, which then whistled down toward Meng Hao. The long spear danced, and more booms could be heard as the thousand swords were scattered and sent plunging into the ground. However, it was at this point that 10,000 swords appeared up above.

Rumbling filled the air as they began to fall. The arena had now become a world of swords. Meng Hao was surrounded by a whirlwind, which was the long spear. Banging sounds could be heard as the 10,000 swords were vanquished and sent stabbing into the ground.

However, it was at this point that Zhao Yifan spoke again.

"First Cleaving, Swords Cleave the Heavens!" Instantly, the 11,100 swords that had been stabbed into the ground rose up into the sky, where they merged together to form one huge sword.

One shocking sword appeared, a sword that caused the entire world to go still. For the first time, Meng Hao's facial expression changed as he looked up to stare at the huge weapon. He took a deep breath, raised his right foot up, and then stamped it down hard.

A boom echoed out, and his Dharma Idol suddenly began to expand until it too was 6,000 meters tall. It took a step forward and then punched out toward the huge sword.

The resulting boom was deafening, and the entire world trembled. The sword slashed through the fist of Meng Hao's Dharma Idol, then

continued to cut down until it was only seven inches away from the top of Meng Hao's head, where it came to a stop. A defiant droning sound could be heard from the sword, and then it collapsed.

When the sword fell to pieces, Zhao Yifan coughed up blood and staggered backward.

Meng Hao looked up at the collapsing sword, and then turned to look at Zhao Yifan.

"You're pretty strong...." he said. "But now, it's my turn." With that, he vanished. When he reappeared, he was directly in front of Zhao Yifan, whereupon he clenched his hand into a fist and punched.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Meng Hao punched nine times; this was none other than the Nine Heavens Destruction.

The final blow unleashed violent upheavals. Zhao Yifan was sent tumbling backward, blood spraying from his mouth. He toppled head over heels along the ground, but before he could get very far, Meng Hao transformed into the vulture and swooped down toward him.

# Chapter 880: Shocking Transformations!

The vulture's claws could shred metal and crush stone!

Blood sprayed from Zhao Yifan's mouth, and his chest was a mass of mangled flesh. However, his mouth was twisted in a cold grin and he suddenly opened his mouth, causing a sword to fly out. In the blink of an eye, it pierced through the air and was about to stab into Meng Hao. Meng Hao's eyes shone with a gleam of surprise, and he let out a mighty roar.

The sound of the roar caused ripples to spread out, and the sword stopped in place for a moment. In that short pause, Meng Hao's right hand moved like the wind, unleashing the Star Plucking Magic to grab the sword and crush it violently. Cracking sounds rang out as the sword shattered. Zhao Yifan coughed up blood yet again.

However, he also took advantage of that moment to leap up into the air.

"Dharma Idol True Body!" An expression of madness flickered on his face as he held his ground and refused to concede. As his words echoed out, his Dharma Idol suddenly vanished as it merged into his body. A moment later, a 6,000-meter giant appeared in midair.

It was Zhao Yifan.

"Fang Mu, our battle isn't over yet!" With a roar, he lifted his right hand, within which appeared the Cloud Sealing Sword, which he slashed down toward Meng Hao.

Almost in the same moment in which the sword began to fall, Meng Hao closed his eyes. When he opened them, his Dharma Idol vanished and merged with his body, whereupon another 6,000-meter giant appeared. His foot sped through the air in a roundhouse kick, smashing into the sword. Then, the two of them began to fight back and forth up in the air.

Booms echoed out, and the audiences in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were breathing heavily.

"They're too powerful!!"

"Neither Zhao Yifan nor Fang Mu are Immortals, but even false

Immortals would be like ants to them! They could kill them without expending any effort at all! They could probably even fight true Immortals!"

"They're both only at the peak of the Spirit Realm, but they're shocking even to me, and I've opened 30 meridians!"

"Too powerful!"

"If the two of them actually become Immortals, then of the ten stages in the Immortal Realm, they would definitely have at least 90 meridians!"

In the starry sky palace, the various Patriarchs were staring fixedly at the proceedings. Although any one of them could easily defeat Zhao Yifan or Meng Hao, the battle that was playing out in front of them was stunning and spectacular. After all... even though it was only a Spirit Realm battle, the Patriarchs were able to sense that both Zhao Yifan and Meng Hao both had the potential to be future Paragons.

"They both have 6,000 meter Dharma Idols. That's comparable to a stage two Immortal. In the ten stages of the Immortal Realm, each stage adds 3,000 meters to one's Dharma Idol!"

"Both of them have built a strong foundation for success. Zhao Yifan has been suppressing himself in the Spirit Realm for a long time, just waiting for true Immortal destiny to appear. Then, he can use his Immortality Illumination Vine to achieve true Immortal Ascension. One thing is for certain, once he enters the Immortal Realm, his cultivation speed will be explosive. He'll most likely reach the peak of the Immortal Realm in less than a hundred years!"

"It looks like Fang Mu is in the same position. In fact, the Chosen of the all the important sects in the Ninth Mountain and Sea are all like that!"

Back in the arena, Meng Hao and Zhao Yifan were fighting fiercely. However, Meng Hao had not yet unleashed his full power. Even though his Devilish will had been rekindled, making him stronger than ever, he could sense that Zhao Yifan was still hiding some sort of terrifying aura, so because of that, Meng Hao was also holding back.

Rumbling filled the air, and Zhao Yifan's eyes were completely bloodshot. By this point in the battle, he was already using everything that he could exercise control over, and yet was still not a match for his opponent. In fact, he was consistently forced into retreat.

"I refuse to accept this!" he thought. Killing intent flickered in his eyes, and even as he fell back, he suddenly took a deep breath. It was at this point that a vine suddenly appeared, wrapping around his body and emanating gentle light, as well as Dao music. It was none other than an Immortality Illumination Vine.

Zhao Yifan threw his head back and roared. At the same time, the Immortality Illumination Vine began to glow radiantly. He began to tremble, and then grew even larger. He was now 9,000 meters tall!!

His 9,000-meter tall body radiated shocking power, a power that Zhao Yifan actually found difficult to control, a power that came from sacrificing the Immortality Illumination Vine.

When the crowds out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea saw what was happening, they were sent into an uproar.

"He was actually suppressing his cultivation base before!!"

"Heavens! He's actually... comparable to a stage three Immortal!"

"Fang Mu is finished!!"

Zhao Yifan's vision had grown blurry. The only thing that he could see now was Meng Hao, and the only thought that existed in his head was that he had to defeat Fang Mu!

BOOM!

Zhao Yifan's body flashed, and his energy surged to the heavens. He closed in on Meng Hao, sword qi raging in all directions, shattering the air. Rumbling sounds rang out as they once again began to fight.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered. Black flames surged around him as his Dharma Idol body suddenly grew with explosive speed. Now he was 9,000 meters tall too!

In that instant, a collective gasp of disbelief could be heard out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, and even from the cultivators on the Dao Tree.

“Heavens! Fang Mu was also concealing his true cultivation base. I can’t believe that he... is also comparable to a stage three Immortal!”

“Just who is going to win this battle!? Who... is going to take first place!?”

Booms rang out as Meng Hao and Zhao Yifan fought back and forth. In the blink of an eye, hundreds of exchanges had taken place. The ground quaked, the entire golden arena was shaking, and rifts could be seen in the air in all directions.

Finally, Zhao Yifan staggered backward, blood spraying from his mouth, a look of despair on his face. He had unleashed all the power he could muster, had done almost everything he could do, and yet still could not gain victory over his opponent.

“No,” he thought. “I still haven’t used everything. I still haven’t used the Second Cleaving of the Five Cleaving Swords. But....”

Zhao Yifan’s eyes radiated madness, and as he fell back, he suddenly stared straight at Meng Hao.

“Fang Mu, unleash the battle prowess of your most powerful cultivation base! We’re going to determine victory and defeat with one move!” With that, Zhao Yifan tilted his head back and laughed uproariously. His lips were twisted with madness, and the obsession to win. Suddenly, he began to shake, and a burning aura exploded out.

In that instant, his Dharma Idol body began to emit blinding light. The light spread out and then all of a sudden... shrank back down!

This was... Dharma Idol self-detonation!

“Sublime Flow Sword Grotto, Five Cleaving Swords, also known as Five Immortal Swords. With my current power, I can unleash the First Cleaving. Now, I will utilize the power of self-detonation to unleash the Second Cleaving!

“Fang Mu, if you can’t stand up to this attack, then you will be defeated!” As Zhao Yifan spoke, his Dharma Idol rapidly grew smaller. However, his terrifying aura grew more and more powerful.

The audiences in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were in an uproar. In the starry sky palace, the Patriarchs had all risen to their feet. The old man from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto stamped his foot onto the ground.

“So impulsive!” he thought, frowning. As he watched the scene playing out on the vortex screen, his expression darkened.

“Fang Mu,” cried Zhao Yifan, “after this attack, I will be powerless to do anything. If I don’t die, then at the very least, I’ll have to go into secluded meditation to recover, and it will be difficult for me to create another Dharma Idol. But I, Zhao Yifan, have no regrets!

“This battle, this attack, contains all of my hope! Show me... exactly how strong you actually are!” By now, Zhao Yifan had shrunk from 9,000 meters tall to only 900. His energy continued to surge, and the air around him shattered. Even the arena itself was trembling.

Meng Hao looked in Zhao Yifan’s eyes, and what he saw was a madness inspired by the heat of battle. He nodded his head silently, and suddenly, the Devilish will inside of him exploded out. Black flames surged into the Heavens, and his Dharma Idol once again began to grow!

9,500 meters. 10,500 meters. 11,500 meters.... All the way to....

12,000 meters!

He stood there, surrounded by intense rumbling. All of the cultivators on the Dao Tree were flabbergasted. None of them had ever heard of someone in the Spirit Realm who was comparable to a fourth stage Immortal!!

They could understand Zhao Yifan’s extraordinary display of power, especially because he had an Immortality Illumination Vine to rely on. But Meng Hao’s Dharma Idol had no Immortality Illumination Vine!

Such a thing was... completely terrifying!!

Out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, the crowds were going wild. The buzz of conversation echoed about everywhere, and anticipatory shouts drifted about.

“Zhao Yifan is detonating his Dharma Idol and drawing on his life force to unleash his most powerful sword attack! And Fang Mu... is actually comparable to a fourth stage Immortal!!”

“Victory and defeat will be determined right now! I wonder which of these two... will take first place!!”

The most anticipated moment of the entire trial by fire, and of all the arena matches, had now arrived!

The audiences' eyes were glued to the vortex screens as Zhao Yifan's body shrank down to the size of a normal person. His 9,000-meter Dharma Idol had collapsed, and all of the power of that collapse had been coalesced into the sword that he held in his hand.

This was no ordinary sword!

“Five Cleaving Swords, Second Cleaving.... Immortal: Why Sever the Mundane World?!” As Zhao Yifan's voice rang out, he lifted his right hand, and his eyes shone with unprecedented brightness. This sword attack contained his life force, his Dharma Idol, his willpower, his everything!

He raised his sword up, and then swung it downwards. It transformed into a Heavenly sword, something that could sever mortality. It was as if the sword were asking an Immortal, ‘will you sever the mundane...? Or not?!’

Rumbling filled the air as the sword slashed down. Meng Hao took a deep breath. He had eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal, and the power of an Immortal meridian. All of that power exploded out as his Dharma Idol performed a double-handed incantation, then prepared to punch out. Shockingly... an Immortal meridian appeared in the air around his Dharma Idol!

The Immortal meridian looked like a strand of silk, swirling around him,

bursting with shocking Immortal qi that coalesced onto his hand, creating the most powerful punch he was capable of. The punch slammed out into the air above the arena.

When the sword and the punch collided, a massive boom rattled out, shaking the entire Dao Tree. The air churned, and even the people outside in the Ninth Mountain and Sea could sense it. In the starry sky palace, the various Patriarchs were all panting.

BOOOMMM!

The sound seemed capable of ripping open the Heavens. A gigantic vortex appeared, instantly spreading out to cover the entire golden arena. The aura inside the vortex grew more and more intense, as all of the power unleashed by Meng Hao and Zhao Yifan gathered together. At the same time, the entire arena began to collapse!

It was at this point that a massive backlash of power rose up in the vortex, which then swept down directly onto Zhao Yifan. It was far too much power for him to bear, and a wan smile suddenly appeared on his face as he realized that he had been defeated.

Blood sprayed from his mouth, and cracking sounds could be heard all over his body. More than half of the bones in his body were shattered as he was violently thrown out of the Dao Tree itself.

“I lost....” he murmured. In the moments before he lost consciousness, he saw Meng Hao standing there, fighting back against the power. Then Zhao Yifan passed out.

After Zhao Yifan lost consciousness, Meng Hao coughed up a mouthful of blood. Instantly, the flames from the Devilish will were extinguished, and a peaceful glow appeared in his eyes. However, the force of the attack against him sent him tumbling back, out of control. Rumbling could be heard as he was sent flying off of the arena and outside of the Dao Tree!

In that exact moment....

The half-headed man who had been lurking outside of the arena the entire time looked over with an expression of excited greed. Utilizing

incredible speed, he shot from his position by the arena toward Meng Hao, who was tumbling through the void above the Ruins of Immortality.

# Chapter 881: Sixth Demon Sealing Hex!

"Dammit!" Meng Hao's face fell. Everything that had happened moments ago seemed almost like a dream. When Qian Duoduo drew out his Devilish will, it influenced Meng Hao on an emotional level, and had also changed his personality. Although he had seemed calm and cool-headed, it was merely an external thing. He had actually lost any sense of what was going on around him.

Situational awareness was something incongruous with the Devilish will.

And now, here he was being ejected from the arena into the outside.

Because of the intense power he had just unleashed, the Devilish will had been completely set aboil, and because of the force that caused him to shoot out of the arena, it had dissipated by more than half. Because of that, Meng Hao's consciousness was not being interfered with any more; it was almost as if he had awoken from a dream.

There was no time to worry about expelling the rest of the Devilish will. Meng Hao was now in the middle of a maelstrom of danger. As soon as he left the arena, the half-headed man closed in and grabbed ahold of him.

His hand was ice-cold, and as soon as it latched onto Meng Hao, Meng Hao's entire body turned icy. He was just about to try to struggle when, all of a sudden, his face flickered. This was a result of something the half-headed man did, a magical art that he unleashed that Meng Hao was very familiar with!

It was... the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex!!

In an instant, Meng Hao was completely confined, incapable of even the slightest movement. At the same time, his life force, his cultivation base, everything was instantly sent toward the half-headed man, as if he wanted to voraciously consume it.

Meng Hao's mind was reeling as the half-headed man instantly shot off into the distance with Meng Hao in tow, to disappear into the mists.

It all happened too quickly. Meng Hao was gone before anyone on the Dao Tree could react.

Ling Yunzi's face fell, and he flew up into the air. However, when he looked out into the boundless void, despite his anxiety, he knew... it was impossible for him to go out into the mists.

The other two old men also had dark looks on their faces as they stared out at the spot where Meng Hao had disappeared into the mists.

Everyone on the Dao Tree gaped in shock.

Everything had happened too quickly, and it was something nobody could have predicted. As for Zhao Yifan, he now lay crumpled on the ground beneath the Dao Tree, unconscious and hovering on the brink of death.

Outside in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, the cultivators who had been watching the battle now felt their minds trembling. Expressions of disbelief appeared on their faces as they watched the half-headed man take Meng Hao away.

"He... he got first place, but...."

"What's going on? How could something like this happen? This is impossible!"

"Dammit! He got first place! He defeated Zhao Yifan! He got first place in the trial by fire, and then first place in the arena matches. He's supposed to become famous in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. How come... how come it had to end up like this!?!?"

"I can't believe the Ruins of Immortality are this dangerous! Why did they have to hold the arena matches in a place like this!?!?"

Many people in the crowds outside in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were furious. They had all just witnessed Fang Mu's rise to prominence. Many had even come to view him as a future Paragon, and yet all of it disappeared in an instant.

There were some people who actually breathed sighs of relief. Fang Mu

was far too powerful, to the point where cultivators of his generation felt stifling pressure. For him to simply disappear was the best outcome, as far as they were concerned.

“Fang Mu is definitely dead. That half-headed man took him away to experience an untimely death.”

“What an unlucky Chosen. Well, now there’s one less person for me to challenge in the future.”

While the crowds in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were abuzz, the Patriarchs in the starry sky palace looked on in shock. The Patriarchs from the Three Great Daoist Societies also wore grim expressions as they slowly rose to their feet. First, they looked toward the spot where Meng Hao had disappeared, and then they turned their attention to the white-robed woman who hovered above the Dao Tree.

The woman glanced down at the unconscious Zhao Yifan, then turned her head to look out into the void. She appeared to be muttering to herself for a moment, and then suddenly she turned and disappeared in the same direction Meng Hao had gone.

After seeing this, the Patriarchs from the Three Great Daoist Societies were extremely excited.

“Perhaps... Fang Mu isn’t dead!”

“Perhaps... we really will succeed this time!!”

“Ah the Echelon. In the great Nine Mountains and Seas, only the Ninth Mountain and Sea have yet to send someone into the Echelon....”

Meanwhile, outside of Planet East Victory, Patriarch Reliance floated among the stars, his eyes wide with astonishment, breathing heavily as he looked at the vortex screen.

“Is the little bastard going to die just like that? Impossible! If the little bastard was that easy to get rid of, well wouldn’t that be poetic justice? Although, how come... how come that half-headed man... looked so familiar...?”

The 10th Wang Clan Patriarch sat cross-legged on an asteroid shooting through the starry sky, watching silently as the events played out on the vortex screen up ahead.

In the Kunlun Society, Pill Demon was trembling, and a brilliant light shone from his eyes. Although he didn't believe Meng Hao could be killed so easily, it was the Ruins of Immortality....

Chu Yuyan was also shaking. Her breath came in ragged pants, and her face was pale white. She didn't dare to believe that Meng Hao was really dead. All of the energy seemed to drain out of her, and she staggered back a few steps. Tears began to stream down her face.

"He won't die...."

On Planet South Heaven, in the vast Eastern Lands, Meng Hao's parents sat in the Fang Clan, their faces pale, holding hands tightly. Fang Xiufeng's expression was calm, but in his heart, a monstrous desire to kill had risen up.

After a few deep breaths, he growled, "Hao'er is not the type of person to die young. He won't be killed. But if he does perish... then I, Fang Xiufeng, vow that I will continue to guard this planet. However, after the 100,000 years have passed, then I will personally open the gate to release the evil Devils, and ensure that the Three Great Daoist Societies are buried together with my son!"

"Furthermore, those Ruins of Immortality... will serve as burial objects!"

When Chen Fan, Fatty, and Li Shiqi saw what had happened, they trembled in disbelief.

All of the Ninth Mountain and Sea was in an uproar. Meng Hao had just earned first place, and then... had disappeared to who knew where!

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Naturally, Meng Hao was not dead.

The half-headed man grasped him tightly as they shot through the mists. Meng Hao trembled as his life force, cultivation base, and aura were

absorbed by the man.

Slowly, the flesh and blood of the man's head began to heal. His aura gradually moved away from death, and a bit of life force could be detected. However, he still seemed to be lacking in terms of consciousness, as if he had no mental faculties, and was only acting on instinct.

Meng Hao couldn't move, and his thoughts were sluggish. Icy coldness filled him. However, as his life force was sucked away, the remaining Devilish will inside of him was also absorbed.

As the half-headed man absorbed more and more of the Devilish will, he suddenly stopped in place, and black flames flickered on his body.

The man had feared the flames of the Devilish will before, and now that he was absorbing Meng Hao's cultivation base and life force, he himself began to burn, and an expression of anguish appeared on his face.

In that instant, Meng Hao was suddenly able to move again. He also recovered his mental faculties, and was instantly shocked.

"He... he can use the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex!" he thought. "Who is he? Don't tell me... he's also from the League of Demon Sealers!?"

"That sword contains the Sixth Demon Sealing Hex, and it's stuck into his side. If he's from the League of Demon Sealers, then either there was infighting within the League of Demon Sealers, or... he stabbed the sword into himself, as a sealing!!" Numerous speculations ran through Meng Hao's head, but in this critical moment of danger, he had no time to think too much about it.

Eyes glittering, Meng Hao took advantage of the moment to unleash his cultivation base. His Immortal meridian began to emanate Immortal qi, which he attempted to use to struggle against the half-headed man. Unfortunately, the man was far too powerful, and Meng Hao's efforts were in vain.

However... Meng Hao was not interested in battling the man. Instead, he used the brief moment in which he could move to suddenly reach out and grab the sword that was stabbed into the man's side.

As soon as he touched the sword, the ancient Demon Sealing Jade in his bag of holding began to vibrate madly. At the same time, the half-headed man began to let out a miserable shriek. As this happened, Meng Hao used every scrap of power he could muster to yank the sword out from the man's side.

As he pulled the sword out of the man... a stream of black blood sprayed out with it. The man trembled, releasing Meng Hao, who then backed up at top speed, face pale and blood spurting out of his mouth.

He had lost a lot of life force, and his cultivation base was in chaos. He was in very sore straits, and yet, he didn't pause for even the least bit, but instead, unleashed every bit of speed that he could to escape.

The half-headed man trembled, and pushed his hand down onto his wound. However, no matter what he did, blood continued to stream out of the wound.

"Who am I...? Who... who am I?" the man murmured, a confused expression on his face. His mind seemed to be in chaos as his words echoed out.

"My sword... my sword...." As his words rang out, the blood flowing from his body suddenly congealed together to form into blood snakes. Their bodies were covered with long feelers, and they looked extremely vicious. More and more of them continued to pour out of the man's wound, until they filled the area, nearly a thousand of them.

Meng Hao's scalp was going numb.

It was at this point that a shrill whistling sound could be heard from off in the distance. A black wind was approaching, along with the decomposing roc, the same things Meng Hao had seen outside of the Dao Tree. The roc closed in greedily, heading straight toward the half-headed man.

As it neared, the man murmured something, and then his eyes glittered, and he performed an incantation with his right hand, then pointed at the roc.

## Eighth Demon Sealing Hex!

That one wave of a finger caused the huge roc to stop in place and then fall downward.

Meng Hao's mind was trembling.

Next, the mists began to churn as more and more figures appeared. One of them was the naga cultivator, and all of them were staring greedily at the vicious blood snakes that were boring out from within the man's wound. From the look in their eyes, it was as if they were staring at treasures. In the blink of an eye, they charged forward madly.

"I am... the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer...." the half-headed man said. He looked around blankly at the incoming figures. His hand was pressed onto the wound at this side as he attempted to prevent the blood snakes from emerging. Within his eyes, a gleam of clarity suddenly appeared.

"Sixth Demon Sealing Hex... Life-Death Hexing!"

With that, he waved his finger.

# Chapter 882: 13th in the Echelon!

Sixth Demon Sealing Hex, Life-Death Hexing!!

The Sixth Generation Demon Sealer pointed out with his right index finger, and instantly two streams qi poured out, one black and one white. They swirled around each other to form a vortex.

That vortex... was gray!

The gray vortex expanded rapidly; in the blink of an eye it was over 3,000 meters wide, and exerted a gravitational force in all directions. The figures that surrounded the area began to let out miserable shrieks; they trembled as their bodies decomposed, and magical symbols appeared all over them.

Those magical symbols were also gray, and they glittered as the figures screamed, then looked blankly toward the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer, dropped to their knees and bowed in worship.

Even the powerful naga did so.

As Meng Hao watched all this, his scalp tingled, and he continued to back up rapidly. However, it was at this point that the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer slowly turned his head to look directly at Meng Hao.

In that instant, the man's jaw dropped.

Meng Hao felt as if his blood were freezing. An intense sensation of deadly crisis appeared, and he suddenly stopped in place and stared back at the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer. He had the sudden feeling that if he continued to back up, the man would attack him.

Currently, the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer seemed to be hesitating, thinking.

Time seemed to slow down. More and more black snakes poured out of the man's wound, and they swirled around him, seemingly on the verge of escaping. However, for some reason they also seemed to be locked in one area, unable to leave.

After a long moment, the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer began to speak.

“End the League of Demon Sealers in exchange for keeping the spirit of Pāramitā asleep,” he murmured, “or... allow fate to run its course, and give hope to the League.” He gazed deeply at Meng Hao for a long moment, and then looked down at the sword Meng Hao held.

“Take this chance to contemplate the matter thoroughly,” he said softly, his expression kindly. Then he turned, keeping his hand pressed down onto his wound, and began to walk off into the distance, surrounded by shrieking black blood snakes. The snakes apparently wished to flee from the area surrounding the Sixth Demon Sealer, but were incapable of doing so, and were dragged along with him as he walked off.

As for all of the other figures in the area who had been caught up in the Life-Death Hexing, they seemed to have lost all sense of themselves, and slowly began to follow the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer.

“Senior!” Meng Hao suddenly cried out. “What happened to you? Where are you going!?!?”

“I was defeated in the third Mountain and Sea Tribulation....” The Sixth Generation Demon Sealer’s voice was archaic and ancient. “I am going to search for my final resting place.... As for you... in the future, you will also face the Mountain and Sea Tribulation. If you are defeated, then we will be waiting for you on the road to that final resting place.

“Demon Sealers. The League. We are the most powerful in the Nine Mountains and Seas. We are also the ones... who bear the most grief.

“It is a rough and bumpy road, so take care of yourself....”

Meng Hao looked at the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer’s back as he floated off into the distance.

“Defeated?” he said, staring in shock. Then he suddenly thought back to the words uttered by the Eighth Generation Demon Sealer, which were recorded in the jade slip. He had also spoken of transcending the Mountain and Sea Tribulation!

“What is the Mountain and Sea Tribulation!?” Meng Hao asked urgently. As he looked at the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer, Meng Hao suddenly had an intense premonition that one day... he could end up just like this.

“Ancient Dao; Tenacious Desire to Seal the Heavens, Benefaction for All in the Mountains; Inevitable Dao Tribulation of the Nine Mountains and Seas; Perennial Will!

“Ancient Dao; Study Demons of Myriad Variations; Tread not the Path of Immortals; Face the Tribulation of the Nine Mountains and Seas; My Dao is Eternal; the Masses Have Erred, but My Dao Is True; Perennial Will!”

Those same two verses!

Meng Hao’s mind trembled. They were the same words that had been uttered by the Eighth Generation Demon Sealer.

“What happens in the case of success!?” Meng Hao asked. The Sixth Generation Demon Sealer was already far off in the distance, but after a long moment, his ancient voice echoed weakly into Meng Hao’s ears.

“With a thought, the Nine Mountains came into existence. With a thought, the Nine Seas appeared. The Nine Mountains and Seas, return to the Essence.”

Meng Hao’s face was pale. Everything he had seen since leaving the arena was like a dream. It turned out that the half-headed man was actually... the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer.

“If all that happened was that he failed to transcend some tribulation... then what horrifying thing happened to his body? And what were those blood snakes?!

“With a thought, the Nine Mountains exist. With a thought, the Nine Seas appear. Nine Mountains and Seas, return to the Essence. Just what does that mean?

“Nine Mountains and Seas. The Essence.... The League of Demon Sealers....” Meng Hao was now panting.

“Also, how could the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer use the Eighth

Hex?"

After a long moment, he grew silent and then looked around. Then, doing his best to remember the path the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer had taken to get to this place, he began carefully making his way back.

There were far too many dangers lurking in this place, many of which would be fatal to him. All he could do was remain as cautious as possible. The slightest misstep could lead to him perishing.

Time passed.

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The arena matches were over. A pained expression could be seen on Ling Yunzi's face. He really had attached a lot of importance to Meng Hao. He couldn't forget the steadfast expression on his face when he'd retrieved the Feng Shui compass.

He left, along with the other two men from the other Great Daoist Societies. They took the cultivators away from the arenas, the Dao Tree, the God corpse, and the Ruins of Immortality. They returned to the starry sky.

Some people went home, others were taken in by the sects as disciples. The Three Great Daoist Societies' trial by fire and accompanying arena matches were officially concluded.

Zhao Yifan was taken back to the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto. When he regained consciousness and heard about what had happened, he balled his hand into a fist and slammed it into the ground. Blood spattered out of his fist, and intense regret could be seen in his eyes, along with determination.

In the end, Chen Fan was taken in as a disciple of the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto.

Fatty went to the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum. When his master accompanied him back to Planet South Heaven and found out that he had over a hundred beloved concubines, he stared in shock, and was speechless for a very long moment.

Li Shiqi joined the Church of the Blood Orchid. Considering her experience fusing with the Blood Orchid, she was immediately put into the running to become Holy Daughter.

Wang Youcai's unsurpassed brutal experience, a madness in which he had destroyed his own eyes, leaving him in a world of darkness, was actually in perfect concordance with the Dao of the Moonset Lake.

After moonset, there is no light whatsoever in Heaven and Earth. Before light arrives, when there is no moon, everything is covered by...darkness.

In addition to these four, there were quite a few others from Planet South Heaven who participated in the trial by fire and were accepted as disciples into other minor sects. Others returned home in disappointment.

Time passed, an entire month. During that month, the name Fang Mu became well-known throughout the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Even cultivators who hadn't been watching the vortex screens heard of the stories.

He was not Immortal, and yet was as powerful as a stage four Immortal!

He took first place in the trial by fire and first place in the arena matches. Because of everything that had happened, Fang Mu became a legend. That was especially true when it all ended with him disappearing into the Ruins of Immortality. Because of that, the legend spread even more widely.

Meanwhile, Meng Hao plodded along through the Ruins of Immortality, his face pale. He sent his divine sense out, but didn't dare to send it too far. During the past month, he had already faced several dangerous situations. On three of those occasions, he had almost ended up dead.

On more than one occasion, he saw a group of huge floating heads. Each of the heads seemed to be as big as a planet, causing Meng Hao to pant, and his mind to spin.

He saw an ancient battlefield, filled with countless corpses. Roving amongst the corpses were people who... feasted on the rotting flesh around them. He had no idea when the battle had actually taken place, but

the corpses still had flesh on them, as if they would never rot away.

He saw a huge medicinal plant garden, choked with weeds. However, within the weeds, Meng Hao caught sight of some legendary medicinal plants, the sight of which left him panting.

They were plants that Pill Demon had spoken of back when he cultivated the Dao of alchemy in the Violet Fate Sect, plants that were supposed to be extinct. However, within that medicinal plant garden, he saw at least a hundred different varieties of such legendary plants.

There was something else he saw there that was especially noteworthy... an Immortality Illumination Vine!!

The only problem was that there were innumerable black beetles in the area, seemingly without end. If he got too close, they would fly up in great clouds, forcing him to flee off into the distance. If he had been even the slightest bit slower, it would surely lead to his death.

He saw something the size of a planet, but covered with tentacles. Even the mere sight of it in the distance caused Meng Hao's scalp to grow numb, and he immediately fled.

At one point, he saw a right hand that was so huge it looked as big as a galaxy....

In addition to these things, he saw innumerable corpses floating about in the Ruins of Immortality. There were shattered remnants of buildings, vast stretches of land, and even wild beasts whistling through the air.

Compared to these vast and mysterious Ruins of Immortality, Meng Hao himself was tiny and weak. Compared to all of the amazing things he saw, he was nothing.

During the month, some of his life force actually vanished. However, his cultivation base was slowly recovering, which gave him some more confidence. Most importantly, the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer's sword contained some strange power. Any time he faced some danger, the sword would emanate a bright light, which was one of the main reasons Meng Hao was still alive.

When he touched the surface of the sword, he was able to feel the Sixth Demon Sealing Hex. However, this hex was a difficult one, and during the month, Meng Hao was unable to gain enlightenment.

After walking around for a month, he was unable to find the corpse of the Pāramitā God. Nor did he ever see the Dao Tree. The only way for him to find his path back home was if he found that corpse and that tree.

One day, he saw an Immortal's cave, floating there in the air. It appeared to be in the midst of a phasing teleportation cycle, occasionally there, occasionally not there.

It was covered with cracks, as if countless battles had been fought outside of it. When Meng Hao looked at the cracks, his mind spun, as if there were shocking divine abilities and magical techniques inside of them.

In the instant that he caught sight of the Immortal's cave, its door opened soundlessly, and a white-robed woman could be seen sitting there. In that moment, it seemed as if everything else disappeared except for the woman, sitting there all alone.

Her gaze was tranquil as she looked off into the distance, and also seemed to be filled with an unending loneliness....

She seemed to be the type of person who could elicit the worship of all living things, who could cause the Ruins of Immortality to tremble. She seemed to have lost something that she could never get back, something that only the sad song that had echoed out by the Dao Tree could possibly clearly explain.

She slowly looked up, and her gaze fell onto Meng Hao.

Meng Hao trembled as he realized that this woman... was none other than the one who had appeared by the ancient Dao Tree, the one who had caused all the other figures to bow in worship.

"Henceforth you are 13th in the Echelon," she said slowly. Her echoing voice sounded as if it was resonating out from ancient times.

# Chapter 883: Snatching Food From the Tiger's Mouth!

"13th in the Echelon?" said Meng Hao, gaping at the woman. He had no idea what she was talking about.

The woman didn't respond at first. She simply looked at Meng Hao, her expression one of seeming reminiscence, as if she were thinking of something she had once experienced. After a long moment, her cold voice echoed out once again.

"In the great Nine Mountains and Seas, there are only room for nine. There are a thousand years until the plan can be carried out. The nine people who break into the Ancient Realm first, can set off on the journey.

"There are already seven people ahead of you who have succeeded.

"The Ninth Mountain and Sea has already fallen behind by quite a bit." With that, she extended her right hand and pointed at Meng Hao. He was incapable of resisting as a sealing mark flew out and settled onto his forehead.

The sealing mark glittered with dim light, flashing thirteen times before it faded away.

The sealing mark caused Meng Hao to tremble, and suddenly, he felt as if an additional stream of qi had appeared inside of him. The qi circulated throughout his entire body, then concealed itself, fading away.

"This sealing mark can protect your soul from being destroyed, but only twice," the woman said, her ice-cold voice echoing about.

"After that, if your soul is exterminated, then naturally your qualifications will vanish. However, if you eventually enter into the top nine rankings... then your future potential is limitless.

"Seize this opportunity." Having finished speaking, the door of the Immortal's cave began to close, and the Immortal cave itself began to fade, as if it were about to vanish.

"Senior," he replied, "the opportunity you speak of, and this setting off on a journey. What's the destination?"

The woman's voice echoed out from within the Immortal's cave: "Outside the great Nine Mountains and Seas, to the outside world. To find out the true reason that ancient war was fought.

"There are some who wish to awaken a certain person," the woman murmured. "There are some who wish to bring a certain person back to life.... The fault does not lie with us!" She seemed to be on the verge of fading away.

"Senior, wait a moment," said Meng Hao. He still had the feeling that the sealing mark wasn't a good thing, and that the so-called good fortune was good fortune in word only. Currently, he was left with a sense of extreme danger. "I still don't understand," he continued. "If my soul is exterminated, and my qualifications vanish, then what about the person who kills me?"

"Whoever kills you will acquire the sealing mark. If they can come to me here, then they will be the successor of your qualifications." The Immortal's cave was now approximately seventy percent vanished, and the woman's voice was faint.

Meng Hao's eyes widened, and he anxiously said, "Senior, um... my father and mother are getting old, and I also have an older sister. I'm waiting for my beloved to return to me. Uh... can I decline to go? I don't really want this sealing mark."

"You were enlightened regarding Paragon magic, took first place in the arena matches of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, and have the qualifications of a Daoist Society. Therefore... you cannot decline to receive my sealing mark. If you do not wish to make the journey, then go out and find someone to exterminate your soul twice." The Immortal's cave was fading away rapidly, and now only ten percent remained.

"You...." Meng Hao was getting really anxious now. "Senior, I'm stuck here, and can't get out. If I'm 13th in the Echelon, is there any way you can get me out of here?

"If I can't get out, then I might perish, then you putting me in the Echelon would have been completely in vain. Furthermore, this place is simply too dangerous for someone like me."

Meng Hao was pretty sure that most of the sects would have no idea what this woman was talking about when she mentioned the Echelon. However, the Three Great Daoist Societies definitely knew. And while they might not bear him any ill intentions, he didn't like his own life or death to be determined by a mere thought on the part of someone other party.

The vanishing of the Immortal's cave paused momentarily, and after a moment of silence that lasted for the space of a few breaths, a crystalline beam of light shot out from inside to land in Meng Hao's hand in the form of a jade slip.

"That jade slip will teleport you out of here. You can only use it once, and it will take you anywhere that you can mentally recall." After she finished speaking, the Immortal's cave vanished completely.

Meng Hao held the jade slip in his hand, and his eyes widened. Then he frowned and touched his forehead. After a moment passed, his eyes began to glitter.

"Forget about this Echelon business for now. Just finally being able to get out of here is good thing!" Meng Hao knew that if he only relied on the power of his cultivation base to get out, it would be far too difficult.

After taking a deep breath, he hefted the jade slip and was about to use it to teleport out, when suddenly he gave a start.

"Now that I can leave any time I want... well, if I left now, it would be a bit of a waste." After thinking about it for a moment, his eyes filled with determination, and he gritted his teeth.

"I'm gonna give it a shot!" he thought. That was Meng Hao's personality. To go out and return empty-handed was a waste. Therefore, he turned and retraced his tracks back to the medicinal plant garden.

Rewards come only with risk!

After Meng Hao left, the Immortal's cave that had just vanished

suddenly reappeared. The white-robed woman also returned, and she watched Meng Hao walking off into the distance, a look of reminiscence on her face.

“The League of Demon Sealers....” she murmured. In that moment, a rare tenderness appeared on her face.

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Meng Hao proceeded cautiously through the Ruins of Immortality. In almost any location in this place, it was possible that there were terrifying things lurking about that could destroy him in body and spirit. There were many places that he couldn’t avoid no matter how cautious he was. It was fortunate, therefore, that Meng Hao had already traveled this path before and thus didn’t attempt to explore any of those locations. Instead, he proceeded slowly and carefully for about half a month until he once again found himself outside the medicinal plant garden, where he stood there and salivated at what he saw.

From a distance, the medicinal plant garden seemed like a vast stretch of land overrun with countless weeds. However, amidst the weeds were random medicinal plants, many of which were virtually extinct in the outside world, and which would be called Celestial medicinal plants. There were even some locations that had legendary Holy medicinal plants.

The problem lay in the innumerable, frightening black beetles with razor-sharp mandibles that had occupied the entire garden and posed a threat to everything nearby.

“That’s... Reincarnation Leaf!

“And there’s a Sun Blossom!

“That’s Arhat Grass!” Meng Hao was trembling with anticipation. Even from a distance, he was able to recognize these three Holy medicinal plants. Any one of them was enough to cause people in the outside world to go crazy.

Further in, there were a greater quantities of even better Holy medicinal plants, but Meng Hao knew how to restrain himself. It would clearly be

impossible to get that far in. Not to mention, even though everything in the area of the much-closer Reincarnation Leaf seemed harmless at the moment, Meng Hao remembered that when he had come here earlier, a step too close had given rise to clouds of black beetles.

Reincarnation Leaf came from a small violet-colored tree. Nine leaves grew on the tree, and they bore the shape of crescent moons; a unique magical symbol glittered brightly on each of them. Just looking at the tree gave a person the sensation that they were looking at the cycle of Reincarnation itself.

As for the Sun Blossoms, they creped along the ground, tiny orange flowers that looked exactly like suns, glowing with brilliant light.

Then there was the Arhat Grass, which was an ordinary-looking plant that resembled a dandelion.

Meng Hao took a deep breath and then narrowed his eyes. Holding the jade slip in his left hand, he gritted his teeth and then slowly caused his aura to weaken.

“When I came here before,” he thought, “tens of thousands of beetles appeared when I got within three thousand meters of the medicinal plant garden.... It seems the beetles are sensitive to auras....” His aura continued to grow weaker and weaker, until he had suppressed himself to the point that he bore the appearance of a Core Formation cultivator.

“A bit more!” he thought, still not quite convinced that it was enough. After pushing his aura down even further, it was at the Foundation Establishment stage. This was the limit of what he could accomplish at the moment.

Next, his body flickered as the shapeshifting meat jelly was tossed out. It was just about to begin jabbering when it suddenly looked around and started shaking.

“Dammit! Dammit! I was only asleep for a bit and y-y-you... you brought me to a place like this? Heavens! Heavens! This... this place is way too dangerous!!”

“Quiet!” snapped Meng Hao. He quickly retrieved the black feather, gave it to the meat jelly, and then provided a few instructions. After hearing his plan, the meat jelly was shocked, and shook its head vigorously. However, after Meng Hao uttered enough threats, the meat jelly put on a long face and agreed to the plan.

Meng Hao crept slowly toward the medicinal plant garden. He’d already made the decision that if he couldn’t acquire the Holy medicinal plants, then he would swallow his regret and teleport out. However, by this point, he had reached the 3,000-meter position that had caught the attention of the countless beetles before.

His heart pounded madly as his foot stepped past that point. He stared up ahead, vigilantly preparing for the beetles to appear, yet none did.

“This method works!” Licking his lips, he continued forward until he was at the 1,500 meter mark. Suddenly, dozens of black beetles flew up from within the weeds. Meng Hao’s face fell, and he gripped the jade slip tightly. However, he held his ground, gritting his teeth and remaining stock still.

The dozens of black beetles all emanated ferocious auras as they flew about. However, after finding nothing, they slowly flew back down to the ground.

Beads of sweat rolled down Meng Hao’s face. He knew that at this distance, if the black beetles suddenly attacked, he would be in great danger.

After a long moment passed, he gritted his teeth and crept forward again. He was now at the 1,000-meter mark, and a thousand beetles flew up buzzing into the air. Meng Hao was even more nervous than before.

“The only way I can get close is be suppressing my aura to the point where they think I’m too weak to be a threat.” A moment later, the black beetles all flew back down to the ground, and Meng Hao crept forward once again.

600 meters. 300 meters. 150 meters!

As soon as he passed the 150-meter mark, his eyes widened, and his throat tightened as everything turned black.

Tens of thousands of beetles instantly shot up into the air.

In that moment, Meng Hao urgently sent out divine will. Further out, the meat jelly was trembling and cursing inwardly. Gritting its teeth, it used the black feather to suddenly cast out a shocking aura.

Immediately, the beetles up ahead of Meng Hao were sent astir. A black sheet of light rose up that was composed of tens of thousands of black beetles, all of whom shot directly up into the sky.

The auras cast out by the beetles brushed against Meng Hao, and blood sprayed from his mouth. However, his expression was one of complete determination and utter excitement. His body flickered as he shot down toward the Reincarnation Leaf. Without the slightest hesitation, he didn't collect the leaves, but actually tried to wrench the entire tree out of the ground, along with the Immortality Illumination Vine that was at its root!

# Chapter 884: Family Reunion

The little violet tree was actually very tough; unexpectedly, it resisted Meng Hao's efforts to pull it out of the ground. A brutal gleam appeared in Meng Hao's eyes, and he used all the force he could muster; the power of a stage four Immortal exploded out as he tugged violently on the tree until a boom could be heard, and the tree was pulled up out of the ground.

"Rich! I've struck it rich!!" Meng Hao's eyes gleamed with excitement, and his heart pounded with happiness. He turned and sped toward the Sun Blossoms. Eyes burning with madness, he waved his sleeve to pull them up by the root as well.

All of this happened in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. In the meantime, the meat jelly was hollering and blubbering as it speedily retreated through the sky above, its entire body numb as it looked at the endless black beetles flying toward it. As it shot backward, the illusion created by the black feather fell away.

With its aura suddenly weakened, Meng Hao's actions down below were instantly noticed by the black beetles. Such provocation was something they hadn't experienced in years; no one had ever had the gall to try place themselves within the mouth of the tiger.

Rumbling could be heard as the beetles performed an about face and shot toward Meng Hao. They moved with incredible speed, blanketing the area as they closed in. The meat jelly gritted its teeth. It didn't want to follow the plan that Meng Hao had laid out, but it thought about how dangerous the place was and changed its mind. Wailing piteously, it used the black feather to make itself look like a black beetle, which then joined the army of other black beetles in their charge.

Such a transformation would be very difficult to pull off without the black beetles noticing, and sure enough, some of the beetles detected the anomalous presence of the meat jelly. Some of them charged toward it madly and began to voraciously bite it. The meat jelly howled, but continued to shoot toward Meng Hao as fast as possible.

Meng Hao's face flickered as he looked at the cloud of black beetles closing in on him. Scalp tingling, he used his left hand to press down on the jade slip. Rumbling could be heard, and a bright light began to shine as the power of teleportation exploded out.

In that instant, Meng Hao used the Star Plucking Magic to grab another Holy medicinal plant off in the distance. In the blink of an eye, the plant flew through the air to land in his hand.

At the same time, the black beetles roared down toward him. The quickest of them all was the meat jelly; when it saw the light of teleportation growing stronger around Meng Hao, it nearly went crazy. It had no desire to be left behind in this place, so it burst forward with all the speed it could muster, latching onto Meng Hao's robe with its mouth and holding on for dear life.

The countless black beetles pounced onto Meng Hao, but in that instant, the power of teleportation peaked, and he vanished.

Suddenly, the land began to tremble in response to the provocation of the teleportation. In all directions, everything turned black as millions of black beetles flew up into the air, covering the sky. At the same time, the land continued to change violently. Even though the beetles had flown up into the air, the land didn't change color; it was as black as ever.

A muffled roar could be heard from the ground, and everything was shaking. Suddenly, it became clear that... the land was not land at all, but actually, an enormous black beetle!

In a scene reminiscent of Patriarch Reliance that year, the land in the area turned out to be resting on the back of an enormous black beetle!

Snatching food from the tiger's mouth!

If Meng Hao did not possess the teleportation jade slip, then even if he had a cultivation base in the Ancient Realm, it wouldn't have mattered. He would have been killed in body and spirit.

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In the vast Eastern Lands on Planet South Heaven, snowflakes drifted

through the air, and the land was the color of silver. It was winter.

In the mountains where the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple had once stood, a bright light rose up into the air as an enormous teleportation portal appeared.

Rumbling could be heard, and the bright light faded to reveal Meng Hao. As soon as he appeared, he shot forward at top speed. The meat jelly was still latched onto his robe, and there were seven black beetles following him that had been caught up in the teleportation.

The black beetles were streaks of black light that shot murderously toward Meng Hao.

He took a deep breath, and, sensing that he was back on Planet South Heaven, lifted his head up and laughed. The feeling of narrowly escaping a catastrophe was exhilarating. He turned and faced the seven black beetles, his eyes flickering coldly.

“Seven? That’s nothing!” He extended his right hand and unleashed the full power of his cultivation base, the power of a stage four Immortal. His Dharma Idol appeared, throwing a punch that gave rise to a tempest, which then bore down onto the seven black beetles.

Of the seven black beetles, five were similar to false Immortals, and two were even more powerful, emanating the aura of stage two Immortals. Back in the Ruins of Immortality, when the beetles were all grouped together, their collective power was like that of the peak of the Immortal Realm. It was something completely hair-raising. But now, there were only these seven, and under the power of Meng Hao’s punch they were all flung backwards. Their carapaces were crushed, and they were flung violently against the side of a nearby mountain.

Despite being injured, they were as vicious as ever. Radiating ferocity, they once again shot toward Meng Hao in a deadly attack.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered brightly.

“My attack just now could have killed a stage two Immortal with twenty opened meridians. But these seven beetles are as ferocious as ever. No

wonder, considering they're from the Ruins of Immortality. It would be a real waste to kill them!" He flickered forward, and as the seven black beetles closed in, he reached out, grabbed them, and threw them into his bag of holding, where he forcibly sealed them.

The seven black beetles struggled in vain as the sealing marks were laid onto their bodies. Even afterward, they still viewed Meng Hao as an enemy, and although they couldn't escape, they would be difficult for him to control.

"When I have the time, I'll refine them a bit. Or maybe when I fully understand the Sixth Demon Sealing Hex, I can use that to control them." Meng Hao took a deep breath and then headed off into the mountains.

"The trial by fire ended with an unforeseen occurrence. I really need to get home to see dad and mom. They're going to be worried." Meng Hao turned into a beam of light that shot out of the mountains and headed toward the Fang Clan.

On the way home, Meng Hao saw snowflakes filling the sky, and colorful lanterns and streamers decorating the homes he passed. Children played happily, and a feeling of warmth and joy filled the air. Lights burned brightly in all the windows.

"Is it New Year already?" Meng Hao suddenly stopped in midair. He suddenly realized that he missed his family. During the New Year festival, such feelings tend to grow stronger. He was just about to continue onward when he suddenly thought of something. 1

"Hey, I got first place in the final arena match! But I never got my prizes!! My Immortal jades! My Immortality Illumination Vine! My Paragon's blood!!" When he remembered these things, his jaw dropped.

When he thought of the value of the Immortal jades, how precious the Immortality Illumination Vine was, and how many Immortal jades the Paragon's blood was worth, his eyes were instantly shot with blood. After a long moment, he clenched his jaw.

"This won't do. Those things belong to me! I'm definitely going to be heading to the Ninth Sea God World! The Three Great Daoist Societies

had better pay me what they owe!!” There was nothing he could do about it now, though, so he had no choice but to sigh in frustration and fly back to the Fang Clan.

It didn’t take long before the Fang Clan fortress appeared up ahead, decked out with lanterns and colorful banners. The feeling of New Year was heavy in the air. All of a sudden, Meng Hao sensed an aura, not of a true Immortal, but perhaps twenty to thirty percent of that of a true Immortal.

At the same time, a young woman appeared. She flew out from the Fang Clan and hovered in midair, looking at Meng Hao.

It was none other than Fang Yu.

She had emerged from secluded meditation while Meng Hao was in the trial by fire. Her cultivation base had risen all the way to the peak of Dao Seeking. With some guidance from Fang Xiufeng, she was now more powerful than a false Immortal. She also would travel the path of true Immortality, although she would use an Immortality Illumination Vine to do so.

When Fang Yu saw Meng Hao, her face lit with happiness. Moments later, Meng Hao’s father and mother appeared from behind her, smiles on their faces.

Actually, Fang Xiufeng had sensed Meng Hao as soon as he had appeared on Planet South Heaven. He gazed at Meng Hao with a loving, although somewhat reserved, smile. As for Meng Hao’s mother, tears were streaming down her face. The past few months in which they hadn’t been certain whether Meng Hao was even alive, had left her haggard from grief.

“Dad, mom, I’m back,” Meng Hao said, smiling. Then he looked at Fang Yu, and couldn’t help but recall memories from Planet East Victory. This was his big sister, who had protected him when he was small. She had a violent personality, which as a youngster had left him awestruck, but there was a warmth between them that came from being family, and Meng Hao could never forget that.

“Sis....” he said cautiously. He actually felt a bit guilty. Before, when they

had met for the first time, he had been unaware of who she was, and they had actually battled each other. 2

"When you say it like that, it sounds a bit forced," she said with an enigmatic smile. After emerging from secluded meditation and learning that Meng Hao had transcended his tribulation, she was very happy. When the two of them were young, and she was forced to watch as he never grew older, it had filled her heart with pain. It was a feeling she would always remember.

Seeing her own little brother in misery was a misery for her as well. His frustration left her feeling unhappy. She would never forget how she had watched him lying in their mother's arms, reverting from seven years of age back to infancy. Fang Yu had stood there, hands clenched into fists, tears streaming down her face as she watched.

She was willing to do anything for her little brother, as long as it would let him be happy, and actually grow up. Back when they were both young, she had stood in front of him on countless occasions, unleashing her violent personality onto any clan members who bullied him.

Back on that occasion when they first met, outside the Rebirth Cave in the Southern Domain, she had immediately sensed something familiar about him. Then she saw the mark on his hand, and despite her violent personality, had been shaken inwardly, and had barely been able to hold back from crying.

In that instant, she recalled all the hardships her parents had endured, and then suddenly feared that Meng Hao might notice something about her, so she had deliberately spoken some confusing and meaningless words to throw him off the trail. From that day forward, she had been looking forward to the day when their whole family would finally be reunited.

Of course, there was also the time she ran into him in the ancient Demon Immortal Sect. At that time, she had an even stronger sense of family. After all, he was her little brother.... 3

She couldn't refrain from forcing him to call her 'big sis.' Later, some of

the other Fang Clan members had scorned Meng Hao, which had caused her rage to flare. She had even been worried that Meng Hao wouldn't be able to find a host body, and had given one of the Fang Clan's host bodies to him.

There had been one moment in the Demon Immortal Sect when she had been fighting Ji Xiaoxiao and the other Ji Clan Chosen. Meng Hao had turned to leave, and in that moment, she was assured that he didn't know who she really was. And yet, seeing him leave like that broke her heart.

Then he had stopped and turned back to look at her fighting the Ji Clan, and she had smiled.

"It's not forced!" Meng Hao replied quickly. He smiled. "Sis, you look prettier than ever!"

"Oh, really?" Fang Yu smiled and began to walk toward him. She lifted her hands up and cracked her knuckles. At the same time, explosive energy surged up, and a brutal aura began to emanate out from her.

Meng Hao's face fell, and he began to fall back. Even as he took his first step back, Fang Yu pounced on him like an explosive dragon.

"Back then you dared to say I was violent!? Well, today I'll show you what violence really is!"

Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li looked at each other and smiled. Then they turned to watch Meng Hao getting chased and beaten up by Fang Yu. He didn't even dare to fight back against her. Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li sighed emotionally.

"It's been so long since our whole family... has been together like this."

Off in the distance, magical fireworks exploded in the sky. A beautiful New Year had arrived.

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1. The New Year referenced here is Chinese New Year or Spring Festival, the Lunar New Year, a very important holiday in Chinese culture in

which almost everyone returns to their ancestral hometown and spends time with family.

2. Meng Hao and Fang Yu met for the first time in chapters 309 and 310.
3. The events referred to in the Demon Immortal Sect started around chapter 561. Fang Yu appeared in and interacted with Meng Hao in several chapters throughout the arc.

# Chapter 885: Revisiting Old Haunts

Meng Hao spent an entire wonderful year with his family. The laughter and happiness they shared would exist forever in his heart.

Some days after that year ended, Fang Yu left. She did not return to the Fang Clan on Planet East Victory. Fang Xiufeng made different arrangements. An Elder from the Church of the Immortal Emperor came to Planet South Heaven to personally take Fang Yu away.

Fang Xiufeng had decided long ago that Fang Yu should join the Church of the Immortal Emperor. Her latent talent conformed with the their cultivation requirements. Furthermore, in the past, Fang Xiufeng and the current Pontifex of the Church of the Immortal Emperor had experienced harrowing adventures together.

With the Pontifex watching out for Fang Yu, and the threat of Fang Xiufeng himself, it was assured that no one would cause problems for her, despite the fact that Fang Xiufeng couldn't leave South Heaven.

Fang Xiufeng was very protective of his daughter, but when it came to his son, his line of thinking was different.

Before leaving, Fang Yu hugged Meng Hao tightly, and then gave him a long look. The affection in her eyes caused Meng Hao's heart to fill with a deep reluctance to part ways with her.

"Little brother, we'll meet again out in the stars," said Fang Yu, tousling his hair. In this moment, there was nothing violent about her at all. She was just a gentle older sister.

Fang Yu bade farewell to her parents, then took a deep breath and followed the respectful Elder from the Church of the Immortal Emperor as he stepped into the teleportation portal. Bright light flashed, and they vanished.

Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li were also reluctant to part with their daughter, especially Meng Li, whose eyes were filled with tears. Being unable to leave Planet South Heaven, she was very worried about Fang Yu,

and currently clutched Fang Xiufeng's hand tightly.

Fang Xiufeng patted his wife gently on the shoulder and watched as his daughter left. His eyes were filled with both sadness and hope. Then he turned to look at Meng Hao.

He knew that it wouldn't be long before Meng Hao also left Planet South Heaven.

"Hao'er, your path doesn't lie in becoming a true part of the Fang Clan," he said. "I've already arranged for you to join the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite, although, if you're not happy with that, you don't have to go there."

"Whatever choice you make, there is one thing that you absolutely must do before anything else.

"You must first go back to the Fang Clan on Planet East Victory. I left an Immortality Illumination Vine there for you, so that you can achieve true Immortal Ascension!"

"Even more importantly... your two Nirvana Fruits are also waiting for you there!"

"Those two Nirvana Fruits belong to you. Now that you've transcended your tribulation, you can assimilate them, and they will help you reach the peak of the Immortal Realm in a very short period of time. In the future, you must not fall behind the other Chosen, but instead, must surpass them! Leave them behind you for all eternity!"

Next to speak was Meng Li.

"If you have the chance," she said softly, "you can go to the Eighth Mountain and Sea. That... is mother's home."

Meng Hao nodded his head solemnly. He understood the deeper meaning in his father's words, the meaning that was left unspoken. His father wanted him to return to the Fang Clan and rise to prominence there. He wanted to make sure everyone knew that Fang Xiufeng's son was no cripple, but rather, a blazing sun!

Therefore, Meng Hao vowed to himself that not only would he rise to

prominence in the Fang Clan of Planet East Victory, in the future... he would definitely go to search for his Grandpa Fang and Grandpa Meng.

"You can leave the lands of South Heaven any time you want," Fang Xiufeng continued. "When you're ready, just let me know. I'll arrange for someone from Planet East Victory to come and escort you there. Remember, your path is that of true Immortality. On Planet East Victory... you can become a true Immortal. Force all the people in the Fang Clan to tilt their heads back to look up at you; make them acknowledge that you are my son." Fang Xiufeng looked deeply at Meng Hao, his son, and his pride in life.

Meng Hao took a deep breath and then nodded deeply.

A few days later, Meng Hao left the Eastern Lands. There were a few more matters he needed to attend to, after which he planned to leave Planet South Heaven.

"My path to true Immortality is different from that of others," he murmured to himself as he flew through the air. "When the Immortal meridian inside of me is completely solidified, then I will become a true Immortal.

"I actually gained a lot from the trial by fire in the Ruins of Immortality, both in terms of the creation of divine abilities and in progress with my Immortal meridian...."

Meng Hao was able to sense when he cultivated via breathing techniques that his Immortal meridian was continuing to naturally solidify. However, the process was very slow, and unfortunately, things like the stone steles from the Ruins of Immortality were things that could only be encountered serendipitously.

"Back when master opened the Door of Immortality, the power that emerged from within the door was probably similar to the power in those stone steles. Both of them can be used to become a true Immortal.

"The fastest way to achieve true Immortal Ascension is via the Door of Immortality....

“Could it really be true that it’s now impossible to achieve true Immortal Ascension here in the lands of South Heaven?” Meng Hao sped through the air, lost in thought. He passed over the Milky Way Sea and then reached the Southern Domain.

He flew down into the Violet Fate Sect, although nobody noticed him. He stood on a tall mountain, looking out over the sect. The statue of Reverend Violet East was no longer there, but this particular mountain that he stood on was one that Pill Demon had frequented.

As he stood there, he took a deep breath and closed his eyes. He rotated his cultivation base, and the Immortal meridian inside of him, at full power. The Immortal meridian was eighty percent solid, and shone with glittering light. Dense Immortal qi emanated out from Meng Hao, and eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal merged into the surrounding lands.

In the blink of an eye, winds began to sweep about, and the lands rumbled and quaked. All of the cultivators in the Southern Domain trembled inwardly. Soon, it wasn’t just the Southern Domain that was affected. The Western Desert, the Northern Reaches, and even the Eastern Lands were all experiencing bizarre transformations.

Gradually, a vortex formed above the mountain peak where Meng Hao sat. However, almost as soon as the vortex appeared, some sort of incredible restraining power exploded out from Heaven and Earth, destroying the vortex.

It faded away, and everything returned to normal. The lands were quiet, and the cultivators of Planet South Heaven were left wondering what astonishing event had just occurred.

Meng Hao opened his eyes and sat there quietly for a long moment before shaking his head.

“Sure enough, it didn’t work.... I can sense the path of true Immortality, but am not able to summon the Door of Immortality. In each of the Mountains and Seas, Immortal destiny will appear on one of the planets, every 10,000 years. The rule cannot be broken.

“What if I used the Immortality Illumination Vine...?” Eyes glittering, he produced an Immortality Illumination Vine from within his bag of holding, the one he had acquired in the medicinal plant garden in the Ruins of Immortality.

After a bit of muttering, he shook his head.

“The Immortality Illumination Vine can definitely lead to true Immortal Ascension. However, it also cuts off the Spirit Realm, and all the advancement made therein. It’s a forced breakthrough.

“The Chosen of the other sects build themselves up for years, restrict their cultivation bases until the critical moment, and then use Immortality Illumination Vines to instantly break through.

“As for me, I’m currently at eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal. If I used the Immortality Illumination Vine to break through, I would become a true Immortal, but I would be stuck at eighty percent. That eighty percent would then become my one hundred percent.

“Apparently, my path of true Immortality really can’t be tread here on Planet South Heaven. Perhaps going to Planet East Victory like my father said is really the best choice.” Meng Hao’s eyes flickered as he gave up on the thought of using a vine to make his breakthrough, and then he took a deep breath and turned to leave.

No one detected his arrival or his departure from the Violet Fate Sect. He next went to the Blood Demon Sect, where he stood outside of Patriarch Blood Demon’s Immortal’s cave. The only thing he could sense was an aura of death; there didn’t seem to be even the slightest bit of life force inside.

Patriarch Blood Demon did not emerge.

After standing there quietly for a long time, Meng Hao went to Blood Prince Gorge. It was maintained by Blood Demon Sect disciples on a daily basis, who kept the entire valley neat and clean. Meng Hao looked at the log cabin, and all the other familiar sights in the valley, and suddenly he seemed to go into a bit of a trance. He saw the outline of a woman, smiling sweetly at him.

“Xu Qing....” he murmured. He would never forget the agreement that he and Xu Qing had made.

“Wait for me.... I WILL find you!” A warm look could be seen on his face as he recalled the times he had spent with Xu Qing in Blood Prince Gorge. After a while, he left the valley and walked over to the place where he and Xu Qing had held their wedding.

A few days later, Meng Hao left. This would be the final time he visited these places, where memories of Xu Qing abounded, before leaving Planet South Heaven.

After visiting the Blood Demon Sect, he traveled about in the Southern Domain. He stopped outside the Song Clan and swept it with divine sense. He could see Patriarch Song, who was incapable of detecting Meng Hao’s presence.

Meng Hao also saw a familiar woman, Song Jia. She sat there cross-legged, meditating. Although she was beautiful, it was possible to see the signs of aging on her.

“She didn’t go to the trial by fire to join a sect among the stars. Does she really want to stay behind on Planet South Heaven...?”

Images from the past flitted through Meng Hao’s mind. After a long moment, he turned and left, leaving Song Jia undisturbed.

He went to the Rebirth Cave, walking through the pressure that had been so difficult to deal with all those years ago. Back then, it had been difficult to take each step, but now, it was as easy as walking down a paved road. The surrounding cultivators in the region of the Rebirth Cave looked at Meng Hao casually walking toward the Rebirth Cave itself, and their faces flickered with astonishment.

“Who is that?”

“He... he’s actually walking right into the depths of the Rebirth Cave region! The pressure here is difficult even for Spirit Severing experts.”

“Why does he look so familiar...?” As he neared the Rebirth Cave itself, more people saw him, and all of them were astonished.

He calmly proceeded deeper into the region, and was soon near the cave mouth itself.

About 1,500 meters from the cave, he saw two old men with Spirit Severing cultivation bases. They sat there cross-legged, resisting the pressure and staring at each other as if they had some enmity between the two of them. Their life forces burned low, and, they clearly hoped to find some good fortune within the Rebirth Cave.

As soon as Meng Hao approached, the two stared at him in shock.

“Who are you?” one of them growled. Then Meng Hao simply walked past them.

This left them in complete shock, and they watched wide-eyed as Meng Hao casually walked past the 1,500-meter mark and then entered the cave itself.

Panting, they exchanged glances, and could see the disbelief in each others' eyes.

“He looks familiar....”

“Is... hey! That was Meng Hao! Heavens! He's the Blood Prince of the Blood Demon Sect! He sealed the Dao Seeking experts from the Northern Reaches, and turned a hundred thousand Northern Reaches cultivators into felon citizens! That was Meng Hao!!”

When the two old men realized it was Meng Hao, their minds filled with a roaring like that of thunder.

# Chapter 886: Another Challenge at the Dao Lakes!

Meng Hao calmly walked into the rugged interior of the Rebirth Cave. He saw bones lying about, which grew fewer the further he went into the cave. He stood in the spot where he had died, and as he looked down, his heart twinged in pain.

He thought of Xu Qing.

She had used her own life force to keep him going, and then, in order to resurrect him, had ended up being imprisoned in a restricted area in her own sect. Everything that had happened after that flitted through Meng Hao's mind. After a long moment, he sighed.

He then walked further into the depths of the Rebirth Cave, but saw nothing there.

There was no Immortal's corpse like the one that had fallen from the sky all those years ago, nor were there any other bizarre beings. There was a strange power that he could sense, but other than that, there was nothing.

"Rebirth Cave.... Rebirth Cave.... Yes, it was here that I actually... experienced a rebirth." Meng Hao shook his head and was about to leave, when all off a sudden he stopped in place and turned his head to look toward the very end of the Rebirth Cave. The cave wall there appeared to be normal, but moments ago, he had sensed a strange aura emanating out from that very spot.

He walked over and examined the area carefully, after which his eyes suddenly went wide, and an expression of astonishment and disbelief filled his face. He had just seen a door in the cave wall.

A closed door!

He took a deep breath and looked closer, but saw nothing. However, he was very certain that moments ago he had not been mistaken in what he saw.

“Now this is the kind of mystery that makes the Rebirth Cave worthy of its name,” he thought. He stood there looking at the cave wall for a long time, before finally turning and leaving. He was very curious, but after his experiences in the Ruins of Immortality, he well knew that there were many great secrets in the world, secrets that the level of his cultivation base did not allow him to understand.

When he walked out of the Rebirth Cave, the two old men were still sitting there cross-legged. When they saw Meng Hao, they began to pant, and immediately got to their knees to kowtow.

“Greetings, Blood Prince Meng.”

“Greetings, your excellency Meng Hao!”

Meng Hao stopped, nodded to the two men, and then prepared to leave.

One of the old men, whose life force was very dim, hesitated for a moment and then asked, “Your excellency Meng Hao... uh... what exactly is inside the Rebirth Cave?”

Meng Hao didn’t respond at first. After a moment passed, he said, “Hope.”

Then he left.

The two old men’s spirits lifted. Sighing, they settled back down cross-legged, hope surging in their hearts.

“According to the legends, the exalted Meng Hao actually experienced rebirth inside of the Rebirth Cave!”

“He said hope exists in there, so maybe we do have hope!!” They glanced at each other, and their eyes shone brightly.

After leaving the region of the Rebirth Cave, Meng Hao flew up into the air and looked around emotionally. Finally, his gaze came to rest on the Ancient Temple of Doom.

After a moment of silence, he shot in that direction. It only took a moment for him to appear in midair above the Ancient Temple of Doom. He looked at the grand temple, and thought about Chu Yuyan, and the

gorge they had spent time in, and the Blood Immortal Legacy tournament.

"Now that I think about it, this temple... protected me from the Heavenly Tribulation that year." He floated down from midair to stand directly in front of the archaic and dilapidated Ancient Temple of Doom.

Stone steps led up to the temple itself, and numerous deity statues could be seen within, statues that bore the appearance of Immortal Divinities, solemn and grand.

There were quite a few cultivators congregated outside of the temple. This was one of the three most mysterious locations in all of the Southern Domain, and was the least dangerous of all, which attracted cultivators who wanted to try to acquire some of the good fortune inside.

Meng Hao's arrival was noticed by a few of the cultivators, but no one paid very close attention to him.

Meng Hao looked at the temple for a moment, then walked forward. Not too far behind him was a cultivator who was observing the temple, but didn't dare to get very close. When he saw Meng Hao walking closer the temple, he called out in a sincere voice.

"Fellow Daoist, you can't get too close to the Ancient Temple of Doom! It's very dangerous!"

It wasn't just this man who noticed Meng Hao now. Many of the surrounding Southern Domain cultivators saw him approaching the temple. Quite a few looked on with cold sneers, or even open ridicule as they waited for something exciting to unfold.

"This temple is something that the average person can't get close to. Our location here outside of the perimeter is the closest one can get. With the exception of some of the Patriarchs, anyone who gets any closer is dead for sure!"

"That guy doesn't look very familiar, what sect is he from?"

As the crowd discussed what was happening, Meng Hao reached the staircase and then began to climb up one step at a time. The other cultivators looked on with wide eyes, panting. Expressions of disbelief and

astonishment could be seen.

“He’s... he’s actually going up the stairs!”

“What cultivation base does he have? This is impossible!”

“How come... he looks somewhat familiar...?”

As the cultivators looked on in shock, Meng Hao finished climbing the stairs and now stood directly in front of the towering temple. The doors had long since been broken completely open, and as Meng Hao stood there, he could clearly see all of the deity statues inside.

Each and every one depicted a powerful expert from the Ancient Doom Clan.

“They fought with Ji Tian...” murmured Meng Hao, “and were defeated. Before their clan was exterminated, they built this temple, the Will of which shall eternally resist the Heavens of Ji....” As he stood there, he felt as if he were looking at a former mighty clan, displaying all the brilliance of their long history.

After a long moment passed, he clasped hands and bowed deeply to the temple.

The entire Ancient Temple of Doom trembled in response to his show of respect. Rumbling sounds echoed out, and all of the cultivators further out felt their minds trembling, and backed up in astonishment.

That astonishment came from the fact that they were witnessing Meng Hao bowing to the temple, and in response, more than half of the statues inside the temple bowed in return, as if they had come to life.

Furthermore, a brilliant light rose up from the temple, which spread out in all directions to cover everything.

“Heavens! What’s going on? How can this be happening!”

“The statues in the Ancient Temple of Doom, they’re... they’re actually alive!!”

“Who is that cultivator?! Can it really be that the temple cannot bear to accept his show of respect without returning the salute?” Even as the

crowds were in an uproar, Meng Hao looked up and saw that roughly sixty percent of the statues were bowing to him. The other forty percent were looking at him with faint smiles.

At the very back of the temple stood three majestic statues who remained completely unmoving. However, they looked at Meng Hao without any ill will whatsoever.

"That's... that's his excellency Meng Hao!!"

"It's Meng Hao!! That's Blood Prince Meng Hao!" As more and more people recognized him, a buzz of conversation instantly rose up.

As Meng Hao looked into the temple, he gradually became aware of numerous ancient voices murmuring in his ears. The voices were obscure, but they seemed to contain anticipation, hope that one day they would be able to leave the temple and carry out a slaughter in the Heavens.

After a long moment, Meng Hao bowed again, then turned to leave. As he flew into the air, the light shining up from the Ancient Temple of Doom slowly faded, and the temple returned to its original condition.

After leaving the Ancient Temple of Doom, Meng Hao did not depart from the lands of the Southern Domain, but instead, headed toward the Ancient Dao Lakes.

"I wonder if Lu Bai and those others are still trapped under there," he thought. He proceeded onward, passing the various locations where he had experienced such dangerous situations that year, and eventually came to a stop above the enormous Dao Lake in the middle of the region.

As he hovered there in midair, looking at the lake, a thoughtful look appeared in his eyes. Were he to pick one place in the Southern Domain that was the most dangerous place of all, the Ancient Dao Lakes would definitely be his choice.

That was especially true due to the third level of the trial by fire therein. When Meng Hao thought back to that incident, he was still unsure as to whether or not he could succeed if he went back. But then his eyes glittered, and he patted his bag of holding to produce a white crystal that

emanated pulsing coldness.

The coldness seemed faint, but according to Meng Hao's speculations, there was something about this object that was completely extraordinary. This item... was the crystal he had acquired from the Feng Shui compass in the Warrior Pavilion in the Ruins of Immortality.

"The Essence of Divine Flame...." A gleam of curiosity appeared in Meng Hao's eyes. He still remembered the enormous flame seed inside the third level. The incredible intensity of that fire had been beyond his imagination.

Because of the level of his cultivation base that year, Meng Hao didn't understand what the term 'essence' meant. Even now, he still didn't fully understand; he only had a vague idea.

"Even with this white crystal, it will be difficult to pass the test in that level. I only want a little bit of that flame... but what can I take it away in?"

After a moment of silent thought, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a bronze oil lamp whose flame had long since been extinguished. As he gazed at the lamp, his eyes glittered.

"Once I leave Planet South Heaven, it's impossible to say when I'll return. I'll definitely be facing all sorts of peril. If I can take some of that flame essence with me, it can serve as a trump card for me in dangerous situations. I'm not sure if I can succeed, but I have to try." Meng Hao took a deep breath and then flew down to the surface of the Dao Lake, which he then sank down into.

In the blink of an eye, he was at the bottom of the lake. There was no entrance visible; everything looked completely ordinary. However, considering that he had eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal, when Meng Hao looked at the lake bottom, he saw a huge teleportation portal.

His body flickered as he moved to stand within the portal, and yet nothing happened.

As he stood there, he transmitted a message with divine will. "Oh senior

member of the people who guard the world beneath the lake, I have returned to once again challenge the third level!"

In response to his divine will, the lake began to churn. After a moment, the teleportation portal rotated into operation, and brilliant light swallowed Meng Hao up.

A moment later, Meng Hao could see again, and he was underground. He was surrounded by numerous mountains formed from magical items, and countless beasts of different colors. There was an enormous door, before which lay a golden beast. All of a sudden, the beast turned to look at Meng Hao.

"You... wish to challenge the third level?" The echoing voice had been very intimidating the first time Meng Hao had come here, but now he simply looked out calmly over the first level. At the moment, he couldn't see any of the other people he had come here with that year.

"There's no need to look for those people," the voice continued. "With the exception of Lu Bai, all of them... have long since perished."

"Are you certain that you wish to challenge the third level?" asked the golden beast, its voice rumbling out like thunder. All of the other beasts in the area looked at Meng Hao, their eyes radiating ferocity.

Meng Hao took a deep breath and nodded.

"Yes, I wish to make the challenge!"

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1. The last time Meng Hao attempted the third level, and also the last time he saw Lu Bai, was in chapter 731.

# Chapter 887: The Essence of Divine Flame!

The golden beast looked deeply at Meng Hao, then threw its head back and roared. Instantly, all of the other beasts in the first level parted, creating a path for Meng Hao to follow to the huge door.

Meng Hao proceeded forward, passing through the animals, his gaze fixed on the door. Suddenly, an enormous beast off to the right who possessed a Spirit Severing aura, roared and pounced toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's expression was normal, and he didn't even look at the beast. He simply raised his right hand and made a grasping motion toward its forehead.

When compared in size to the enormous beast, Meng Hao's hand was minuscule. However, he viciously grabbed onto the beast's head, instantly causing it to begin to howl miserably. In response, the surrounding beasts leapt angrily to their feet.

Meng Hao's expression was calm as he continued to walk forward. He did not loosen his right hand, but instead, dragged the enormous beast along with him as he walked.

The golden beast lying beneath the huge door looked on with wide eyes. However, it did nothing to interfere. It allowed Meng Hao to approach the door, where he finally released the beast from his hand, then looked at the golden-colored beast and nodded. Then he stepped through the door.

When he reappeared, he was on the second level, where he saw the same ancient, white-colored overseer beast that he had seen the last time. He also saw Lu Bai, sitting cross-legged in meditation, just a single pace away from the final level.

The stubble of a beard could be seen on Lu Bai's face, and his clothing was in tatters. However, his face shone with a brilliant light, and as soon as Meng Hao appeared, he glanced over. A look of shock appeared on his face.

Meng Hao stood down below and looked up at the ancient beast. "Senior,

I would like to attempt the third level.”

The beast looked down at Meng Hao and, after a long moment passed, nodded its head. Meng Hao immediately flew up to the peak of the level.

The beast’s pupils constricted, and a look of concentration appeared on its face.

“You’ve changed,” said the beast. “You’re far more powerful than the last time we met.... However, I would like to give you a bit of advice. Considering the level of your cultivation base, you will not be able to pass this third level.

“Considering how you passed the second level last time, you were given a chance to experience the third level for a moment, which is how you escaped death. This time... if you fail, you will likely have no chance to leave the level, and will perish inside.

“The test of the third level is to completely absorb the Essence of Divine Flame into your body.”

Meng Hao looked back silently at the overseer, but his eyes gleamed with determination. He nodded.

The beast thought for a moment, but did nothing more to block Meng Hao’s way. It waved its hand, and an enormous vortex appeared, within which could be seen the flicker of flames. This sea of flames was none other than the entrance to the third level.

Meng Hao was just about to step in when....

Lu Bai couldn’t hold back from calling out.

“Meng Hao.... Um... how are things outside?” He had been privy to the Northern Reaches’ invasion plans, and as such, he knew that the Southern Domain should have been occupied. However, now he saw Meng Hao, with a cultivation base even more terrifying than before. He himself had performed his third Severing, and had successfully stepped into Dao Seeking. However, with his early Dao Seeking cultivation base, he was unable to clearly see Meng Hao’s cultivation base.

He had a very bad feeling, a feeling that caused his face to go pale.

Meng Hao stopped in place and looked back at Lu Bai silently for a moment before replying.

"The Northern Reaches' invasion failed. Most of your Dao Seeking experts were killed."

"Impossible!" replied Lu Bai, his voice hoarse. "The Grand Elder, the High Priest, and all the others aren't just at peak Dao Seeking. Some of them are comparable to false Immortals! Plus, they have powerful magical items! Even a false Immortal who went up against the Northern Reaches would perish! How could they all be dead?!"

"The Northern Reaches has vast resources! How could an army of a million cultivators suffer a defeat like that?!?!"

Meng Hao's voice was calm as he responded, "The Grand Elder you speak of, as well as the High Priest, and a few of the other strongest Dao Seeking experts are all suppressed under a mountain called Sin of the North. Their cultivation bases are being used to replenish the spiritual energy in the lands of the Southern Domain.

"As for the army you speak of, most of those million cultivators died. The surviving hundred thousand or so had their cultivation bases severed and were turned into felon citizens. For generations to come, the bloodlines of the Northern Reaches' cultivators will never produce Nascent Soul cultivators.

"And then there's you. If you get out of this place, you can go to Sin of the North to bear witness yourself. If, from this day forward, you agree to practice cultivation peacefully, then I won't kill you where you stand. However, if you cause any problems... there are people in the outside world who will slaughter you." With that, he ignored Lu Bai and stepped into the vortex.

Lu Bai's face was pale white, and he coughed up a mouthful of blood. From the way Meng Hao spoke, he could tell that his words were not false. Everything he had said was true.

He was silent for a moment, and then began to chuckle bitterly. He thought of his friends from home, his master, his Patriarch. He had never imagined that while he was stuck in this place... the entire world outside would be turned upside down.

In the moment that Meng Hao stepped into the vortex, he felt as if he were passing through a boundless sea of flames. At the same time, a terrifying roaring could be heard.

The roaring became very clear as soon as Meng Hao stepped fully into the world of the third level. In front of him was no sea of flames, but rather, a blood-colored field.

The lands were also filled with white grass.

A total of 990,000 pagodas could be seen circling out in all directions, in the middle of which was a black city. The city was overgrown with the white grass, and a spark of flame hovered in midair above it. The flame seemed as if it would burn for all eternity, and cast brilliant, flickering light throughout the entire world.

Then, the same voice Meng Hao had heard the previous time he had been here echoed out.

“Dao Fang, you must die!!

“You killed me, Dao Fang, and if I’m reincarnated, I’ll definitely kill you!

“The world of Immortals is doomed to experience tribulation! The Immortal lands will grow old, and the Immortals will perish! But I refuse to give in!!

“I know the truth! No matter how long you suppress me, I won’t admit defeat!

“Damned monkey! If I can get free, I’ll have your hide!

“If I’m transmigrated, I will slaughter myself out of this place! If my transmigration fails, I will fall into oblivion like all other living things, with virtually no hope of reawakening even after countless cycles of reincarnation. Therefore, I will leave a Heavenly command for this place!

“My decree contains the essence of my Dao flame, a remnant of the existence of my flame. I hope that countless years later, that vestige will still exist!”

The voice was like a sharp sword, stabbing into his mind. His head spun, and he felt as if his body were about to collapse into pieces.

However, this time, not only had Meng Hao come prepared, but also, his cultivation base was far different than before. It was like the difference between Heaven and Earth. Now, the only thing that happened was that he bled from his eyes, ears, nose and mouth. His body did not begin to fall apart like last time. As the sound echoed out, Meng Hao looked at the enormous Essence of Divine Flame up ahead.

The Essence suddenly burst with power that rumbled out through the entire world. Originally, there had been no flames here, but now, everything burst out with fire. The land, the sky, everything turned into flames. In the blink of an eye, the whole world was aflame.

The flames were shocking, and Meng Hao felt a sense of deadly crisis as soon as they spread out. These flames were definitely powerful enough to kill him.

In the moment of crisis, Meng Hao unhesitatingly produced the white crystal from his bag of holding. As soon as he grabbed ahold of it, icy coldness spread out to cover his body, blocking the flames.

When that happened, Meng Hao sighed in relief. The whole reason he had dared to come to this place was because of the crystal. However, he had only been eighty percent sure that it would be successful, and had thus hesitated. However, now that he saw that the crystal was indeed effective, Meng Hao’s eyes glittered brightly.

He looked up at the Essence of Divine Flame, and smiled in anticipation.

The huge spark hovered in midair, spewing out a sea of flames, as if it were the source of all flames.

Meng Hao took a deep breath. Then, hefting the crystal, he began to slowly move forward. The flames around him raged ferociously, battering

against him in waves. The power of the fire was shockingly intense, and he knew that if even the tiniest ember from those flames touched him, even his Eternal stratum would only keep him alive for a short time before he was completely destroyed.

Time passed, and Meng Hao continued to get closer and closer to the enormous Essence of Divine Flame. After a while, he came to a stop a few thousand meters away from the flame. He found it very difficult to progress further, not because the crystal was incapable of absorbing any more of the flame's power, but because he was physically unable to approach any further even by employing his cultivation base at its maximum power. The pressure in the area was just too intense.

If he didn't have the crystal, at most, he could reach a point around ten thousand meters away from the flame.

Meng Hao took a deep breath and looked around at the sea of flames. By this point, he could see images within the flames, including beasts, magical items and types of vegetation.

Each image was intensely powerful, something that would shock even someone at the peak of the Immortal Realm. The closer he got to the Essence of Divine Flame, the more terrifying the flame spirits became.

"I don't want to take away the entire Essence of Divine Flame," he thought. "I just want a bit of fire to use as a trump card in the future." He cautiously sent his divine sense out, opened a gap in the protective shield created by the crystal, and pulled in a flame spirit that looked like a butterfly. Once it was inside, he backed up at top speed, and used all the power of his cultivation base to use the power of the crystal to envelop the flame butterfly.

After backing up some distance, the power of the flame sea decreased a bit, and Meng Hao stopped. Panting, he looked at the butterfly fluttering around within the power of the crystal. Then, he carefully sent a stream of divine sense toward the flame butterfly. As soon as it made contact, his divine sense ignited into flame, and he instantly severed the connection.

Determination appeared in his eyes as he produced the ancient bronze

lamp from his bag of holding. Exercising the utmost caution, he extended it toward the flame butterfly.

"If this works, then I'll have an excellent trump card to use in the future. If I fail, well... I won't have lost out on anything." Gritting his teeth, he touched the bronze lamp to the flame butterfly.

In that instant, the bronze lamp suddenly flickered. The flame butterfly landed on the lamp's wick, and a puffing sound could be heard as the flame blazed to life!

It only burned for a moment, and then went dark. However, there was now a glimmering spark inside the lamp.

Meng Hao excitedly attempted to put the lamp back into his bag of holding, and was successful. Then he pulled it back out and blew on it. Instantly, a sea of flames erupted out, and Meng Hao held his breath. A moment later, the flames died out, and only a spark remained in the lamp.

"Success!" he said, laughing loudly. Licking his lips, he thought about trying to collect some more flame, but then he looked at the Essence of Divine Flame floating there in midair and considered the bizarre nature of the place. In the end, he decided that it wasn't wise to act rashly. Reigning in his greed, he backed up a bit and then put the the crystal away. He allowed the flames to burn him a bit, then, eyes glittering, stepped into the exit and vanished.

In the moment that he vanished, a vertical eye suddenly appeared within the Essence of Divine Flame. It stared coldly at Meng Hao as he faded away, and then, after a moment, a long sigh could be heard.

"After all these years, he is the first person to succeed.... He... will definitely be back!"

# Chapter 888: Let Them Fly On Their Own!

As soon as the old white-colored beast saw Meng Hao appear back in the second level, he looked a bit surprised.

“Considering your cultivation base, you were doomed to fail,” he said, his voice echoing about. “And yet, you didn’t perish in there....” He looked deeply at Meng Hao, and when he noticed his tattered, charred clothing, his suspicions mostly vanished.

Meng Hao smiled wryly and shook his head, then took a deep breath.

“Senior, I was crude and rash. I thought that my cultivation base was different, and that I could give it a try. I never thought that, as you mentioned, I would fail.... Thankfully, I didn’t get too close, otherwise I would have ended up dead and buried in there.”

The old beast nodded, and Meng Hao clasped hands and bowed. The old beast did nothing to prevent Meng Hao from vanishing into the exit portal.

As for Lu Bai, he silently watched Meng Hao leave.

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In a certain region outside the Ancient Dao Lakes, glittering light rose up as Meng Hao was teleported out of the underground world. His expression was one of excitement as he patted his bag of holding and took a deep breath.

“That fire spirit from the 3,000-meter region is a trump card I can use if I ever run into a dangerous situation involving someone at the peak of the Immortal Realm. Unfortunately, the fire isn’t eternal. I wonder how many times I’ll be able to use it? Not many, I’m sure.” With that, Meng Hao vanished.

Meng Hao appeared in many places throughout the Southern Domain over the following days. He went to many familiar places, including the Black Lands, where he visited many old friends.

The Western Desert was still, for the most part, covered by the Violet

Sea, and was lifeless.

After bidding farewell to his friends in the Black Lands, he went to the place where he'd once encountered the being who had fought with the Heavens of Ji. When he got there, there was no trace of anyone present at all. 1

After that, he went to the Milky Way Sea, where everything was still and silent, a sharp contrast to how it had once been. It was in the Inner Ring was where he had seen the ancient ship to which he felt so much gratitude, the same ancient ship he had also seen in the Ruins of Immortality.

After circling about the Milky Way Sea, he went back to the Eastern Lands. Finally, he let out a long sigh as he realized that it really was time to depart.

"Fatty is now in the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum, Elder Brother Chen Fan went to the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto, and Wang Youcai joined Moonset Lake.... Even all those Chosen I know from the Ji Clan have left to go to the Ninth Mountain." These were all things Meng Hao had recently been told by his father.

All of the Chosen that he had known from the Southern Domain were either dead, gone, or far beneath him in terms of power. Most did not even qualify to meet his gaze.

"It's really time to leave," Meng Hao thought with a sigh. He was now walking through the Eastern Lands, past mountains and through plains, making sure that his memories of the lands of South Heaven were firmly implanted in his mind. One day, he found himself on the shore of a mighty river in the Eastern Lands, where he suddenly stopped in his tracks.

He had sensed a familiar aura, although it was incredibly faint. If he hadn't been walking through this area, he would never have noticed it.

"This aura...." He looked at the river in front of him, which was considered the main river in the Eastern Lands. It divided the sub-continent in half, and actually flowed out from the Milky Way Sea.

The strangest thing was that this aura was not just familiar, it was incredibly familiar. It was... his own aura!

Muttering to himself, Meng Hao followed the traces of the aura until he found himself on a remote shore of the river. There were no people anywhere nearby, and evidence of wild animals could be seen.

At a certain point, he suddenly caught sight of an object on a shallow bank nearby that instantly caused him to stop in place and stare with wide eyes.

Time seemed to suddenly come to a standstill, and the world seemed to cease its rotation. Everything else in front of Meng Hao vanished, except for that one item, floating there in the water. It seemed as if it were something eternal, and quickly became the only thing he could see.

It was a bottle gourd.

It was stuck between two rocks, battered by the elements, having soaked in the river water for countless years. It was thoroughly dilapidated and apparently on the verge of rotting to pieces completely. It floated there quietly, as if it were waiting for someone to come along and pick it up.

Perhaps, were it not for the two rocks that kept it stuck in place, the bottle gourd would have floated away long ago. Perhaps... it would have made it to the Great Tang.

Meng Hao began to tremble. The bottle gourd looked ordinary, but it was something he would never be able to forget.

Back when he was a young scholar, he had yet again failed in the Imperial examinations, then stood atop Mount Daqing, where he wrote something on a slip of paper, stuck it in a bottle gourd, and threw it into the river at the bottom of the mountain. 2

That river had been said to flow all the way to the Eastern Lands, but Meng Hao had long since learned that it connected not to the Eastern Lands, but to the Milky Way Sea.

It was as if, over the years, there were some power that had guided the bottle gourd across the Milky Way Sea and all the way to the Eastern

Lands, where it got stuck in this river.

Meng Hao stared at the bottle gourd with its familiar aura. He had never imagined that one day he would once again see this bottle gourd. He had assumed that it had long since sunk to the bottom of the river or the sea, or had been picked up by someone.

“I threw this bottle into the river before I began to practice cultivation. Now, just when I’m about to leave, I’ve run into it again....” He walked quietly over to the bottle-gourd, then bent down to pick it up.

It was rotting, and as he held it in his hand, he felt as if he didn’t even need to expend any effort to break it open.

“But how... could it possibly still be around after hundreds of years...? It’s just an ordinary bottle gourd. It should have vanished long ago.” After looking at it for a long moment, he uncorked the gourd. Inside, it was slightly damp, but there was no water. Meng Hao turned it upside down, and a rolled up strip of paper fell out.

When he saw the paper, an emotional expression of reminiscence appeared on his face. He thought back to the youthful version of himself, standing there on Mount Daqing, and the bellowing rage he had flown into after each time he failed the Imperial examinations.

He also thought about his life in Yunjie County, and all the things that had happened there.

He gingerly uncurled the strip of paper. Although the words were somewhat blurry, he was able to vaguely make out the grand aspiration that he had written down that year....

He looked at the piece of paper, and as he smiled, it seemed as if the bottle gourd no longer bore the weight of his desire, and it transformed into ash. The strip of paper also gradually disintegrated into tiny pieces that drifted through his fingers and vanished with the wind.

Meng Hao then felt that familiar aura fade away.

He stood there quietly for a moment, saying nothing. Finally, he closed his eyes. Time passed. One day after another went by, until an entire week

passed. The river water flowed, the sun and moon rose and set. Birds and beasts scampered to and fro along the river bank.

Seven days later, Meng Hao opened his eyes, and they shone with enlightenment.

“There is a mysterious power in the world....” he murmured.

“And that power is desire.

“That ordinary bottle gourd was able to survive down to this day because it was sustained from within by my desire. As a cultivator, the desire that I had back then has grown stronger even as I have grown stronger, however far away the realization of it was.

“It was my own familiar aura which helped that bottle gourd... to survive all these years.

“After picking it up, the desire that had coalesced in the bottle gourd and the piece of paper vanished and returned into my hand. That is why it disappeared into Heaven and Earth.

“It’s similar to what Xie Yixian from the Burning Incense Stick Society said during our arena match. Burning Incense... coalesces the desires of all living things, and the cultivation of that desire is burning incense. 3

“I never imagined that I would be enlightened here regarding the power of burning incense.” After a moment he looked down at his hand, which he then waved.

Time seemed to move in reverse, as the drifting pieces of ash from seven days before suddenly reappeared. They transformed into a piece of paper, as well as the bottle gourd which had vanished.

Meng Hao’s expression was calm as he once again placed the strip of paper into the bottle gourd and tossed it into the river. As the water flowed, the bottle gourd bobbed up and down, drifting off into the distance.

“I still haven’t achieved what I desire, so how could I let that bottle gourd disappear...? Perhaps years from now, someone will find my bottle

gourd and open it up to reveal my desire... and my aura....” As he watched the bottle gourd disappear into the distance, a faint smile broke out on his face.

“It’s time to leave,” he said. Taking a deep breath, he turned and, his expression one of determination, strode off into the distance. Eventually, he appeared up in the sky, where he became a beam of light that disappeared off into the distance.

One day later.

In the Fang Clan of the Eastern Lands, a huge teleportation portal had been set up in a rear courtyard. Glittering light rose up from the portal, next to which stood Meng Hao, his parents, and another middle-aged man.

The middle-aged man acted extremely respectfully toward Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li, and when he looked at Meng Hao, an emotional and loving expression could be seen.

“Hao’er,” said Fang Xiufeng, “this is your 19th Uncle. He’s my younger cousin and a member of our bloodline.”

Meng Hao clasped hands and bowed deeply.

19th Uncle laughed heartily and quickly straightened Meng Hao up from his bow. His expression of fondness only continued to grow deeper.

“You’re a good kid,” he said. “Wonderful, truly wonderful. When we get back to the clan, I hope that you can help me take care of my own son. He loafes around all day and is always a big headache.”

“The Fang Clan is on Planet East Victory, which is far away from Planet South Heaven,” said Fang Xiufeng, looking at Meng Hao with a serious expression. “With your cultivation base, you can’t travel directly through the stars. You will need two teleportation portals to get there. Your 19th Uncle has come here personally to escort you along the way.”

Meng Li stood next to Fang Xiufeng, clearly reluctant to part from Meng Hao. However, she knew that Meng Hao’s path lay among the stars, not on Planet South Heaven.

All she could do was start straightening up his luggage. Although he had a bag of holding, she had personally sewn some luggage for him. She straightened up his clothing, then looked over her son, tears welling up in her eyes.

“Mom,” he said softly, “don’t worry, I’ll be fine.”

“I can’t leave Planet South Heaven,” said Fang Xiufeng. “If you face any dangers out there, I can’t protect you. This crocodile can temporarily act as your Dao Protector, but in the end, you must watch out for yourself.” He waved his hand, causing the crocodile to emerge and obediently shrink down and descend onto Meng Hao’s palm, then scurry up into his sleeve. Fang Xiufeng continued quietly, “If you perish....

“Father will get revenge for you!”

Meng Hao and 19th Uncle stood in the teleportation portal. Soft light glittered out as Meng Hao looked at his parents standing outside of the portal. Suddenly, his eyes felt moist, and he dropped to his knees to kowtow three times to his parents.

“Dad, mom. I’m leaving now.... You don’t need to miss me or worry about me, I’ll come back to visit often.”

Rumble!

The light from the teleportation portal rose up into the air. In the moment before he vanished completely, Meng Hao waved at his parents.

Meng Li couldn’t hold the tears back any longer as she watched Meng Hao disappear. Her heart filled with worry, and in that brief moment, she grew older.

Fang Xiufeng seemed strong on the outside, but even his eyes grew blurry.

“The kids have grown up. We have to let them fly on their own.”

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1. Meng Hao interacted with the being in the Black Lands in chapter 321.
2. The scene of Meng Hao tossing the bottle into the river happened in chapter 1.
3. The arena match with Xie Yixian was in chapter 876.

# Chapter 889: Killing Intent Lurking Everywhere!

The scintillating lights on Planet South Heaven lasted for the time it takes an incense stick to burn before fading completely away.

Out in the starry sky was an asteroid field that seemed to be eternally drifting among the stars.

The largest of the asteroids were tens of thousands of meters wide, the smallest were dozens. From a distance, the asteroid field almost looked like a river of stars floating through space.

This portion of space was actually not completely black; occasional dots of sparkling light glittered to and fro. At first glance, the starry sky seemed without end, but in fact, it was not so. It also seemed to pulse with life.

The asteroid field was filled with many large asteroids that were apparently surrounded by shocking power, almost like shields.

One of those asteroids was tens of thousands of meters wide, and emanated glittering light. It was possible to see numerous teleportation portals carved into its surface, over a thousand of them packed tightly together.

One of those teleportation portals was currently emanating dazzling light, and the figures of Meng Hao and 19th Uncle slowly became visible.

“Hao’er,” 19th Uncle said with a smile, “there is a vast distance between Planet South Heaven and Planet East Victory. It would be difficult to teleport there directly. That’s why we need to transfer teleportation portals here.” When he looked at Meng Hao, the emotion and love in his gaze was apparent.

He was very pleased that his older cousin’s son had successfully transcended his tribulation, and was finally able to return to the clan.

When he thought of the steep price Fang Xiufeng had paid over the years, he couldn’t help but sigh in his heart.

"You can take a look around," 19th Uncle continued. "This asteroid belongs to the Fang Clan, so we're in no danger. I need some time to make some adjustments to the teleportation portal. The way it is now, your body probably couldn't handle it. I need about... enough time for an incense stick to burn." With that, he began to make adjustments to the teleportation portal.

Meng Hao nodded in response, then stepped out of the teleportation portal to look around.

There was no sun and no sky. The only things he could see were sparkling stars amidst pitch black darkness. Although this was not Meng Hao's first time stepping out into the starry sky, it was different than those other times.

"I've really left Planet South Heaven...." He looked off into the distance, but actually had no sense of direction, and no way to determine where Planet South Heaven might be. His heart felt a bit empty, and he was also nervous about arriving as a stranger on Planet East Victory.

Of course, that was where he had been born, and was also a planet that belonged to his own Fang Clan.

He patted his bag of holding, within which was a jade slip given to him by his father. It contained a map of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, along with various paths among the stars.

"Once I've finished making these adjustments, we can be on our way," 19th Uncle called out, smiling as he continued to adjust the teleportation portal to suit Meng Hao. "The Patriarchs are all in secluded meditation, and have left the Grand Elder in charge. He was very happy to hear that you're returning, and has arranged for large numbers of clan members to gather together and receive you."

"It's going to be very lively! Hahaha! Once we're back, you really have to help me get my son in line!"

Meng Hao nodded, and for some reason, he wasn't able to keep a bit of warmth from rising up in his heart. That was the warmth of family, a warmth that had begun to grow cold almost as soon as he left Planet

South Heaven and stepped out into space.

"19th Uncle, does all of Planet East Victory belong to the Fang Clan?" he asked.

"Your father didn't tell you? Well, that makes sense. Cousin is a bit resentful of the clan. Ai....

"Hao'er, you probably already know that all the lands and stars are actually part of nine mountains and seas. Another way of putting it is that nine mountains exist in the starry sky, and each mountain has a sea, thus, nine seas.

"The Nine Mountains and Seas are divided into groups of mountains and seas, and thus nine worlds.

"In each of those, there are four planets which rotate eternally around their respective mountains. Outside of the Nine Mountains are two enormous heavenly bodies; the sun and a moon.

"Because of the reflections cast by the sea of stars, the sun and moon look different on each of the planets, but in fact, there is only a single sun and a single moon for all the Nine Mountains and Seas.

"In the Ninth Mountain and Sea, one of those four planets is Planet East Victory, which belongs completely to the Fang Clan. Although there are other sects and power structures on the planet, if the Fang Clan wanted to, we could unify the other powers. Instead, we permit them to exist.

"Actually, the largest planet in the Ninth Mountain and Sea is not Planet East Victory, but rather Planet North Reed. It is several times larger than Planet East Victory, and is where the Wang Clan, Song Clan, and Li Clan, the Three Great Clans, all call home.

"Then there is Planet West Felicity, where you can find the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto, one of the Three Great Daoist Societies, as well as other illustrious sects.

"To further analyze matters, you have to look at the Ninth Mountain and the Ninth Sea as a whole.

“Compared to everything else, Planet South Heaven is special. Since your father didn’t tell you the details about that, then I won’t presume to talk about them.” After providing his explanation, 19th Uncle smiled and continued with his adjustments to the spell formation.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered with an intense light. 19th Uncle’s description overlapped with his own understanding of matters to provide a much larger picture in Meng Hao’s mind.

“19th Uncle, what other sects are on Planet East Victory?” he suddenly asked.

“The most famous are the Church of the Blood Orchid and the Church of the Puppet God, which are listed among the Three Churches and Six Sects. In addition to them is the Medicine Immortal Sect. They might not be listed among the Three Churches and Six Sects, but when it comes to the Dao of alchemy, in all the Ninth Mountain and Sea, they are second only to the Kunlun Society.

“Most accurately speaking... the Medicine Immortal Sect has a deep connection with the Fang Clan. Ai... it was actually founded by a Patriarch of the Fang Clan who got angry and left to start his own sect.

“After we get back to the clan, my son, your cousin, can tell you more about all that.” 19th Uncle extended his right hand and pushed down onto the surface of the teleportation portal, causing bright light to glitter up.

“Alright, that’s it! Let’s get going, Hao’er. After enough time passes for an incense stick to burn, you’ll be able to lay eyes on Planet East Victory!” Laughing loudly, 19th Uncle stepped into the teleportation portal, followed closely by Meng Hao. As the light of teleportation surrounded them, a glow of anticipation could be seen in Meng Hao’s eyes.

Meng Hao and 19th Uncle soon vanished with the light. However, in the moment that they faded away, a black-robed cultivator appeared above the teleportation portal.

He wore no expression at all on his face, which was as cold as ice. He almost seemed completely devoid of emotion. He appeared without making a single noise, and when he saw that Meng Hao and 19th Uncle

had disappeared into the portal, he stamped down viciously with his right foot, instantly shattering the teleportation portal.

The teleportation portal was fundamentally very difficult to shatter. Otherwise, Meng Hao and 19th Uncle would not have been so confident in using it; after all, this asteroid belonged to the Fang Clan, and was protected by a shield, making it very difficult for outsiders to get into the place.

The black-robed man pulled out a jade slip and sent some divine will into it.

"Target acquired. Teleportation portal's foundation destroyed." With that, he vanished.

Almost in the same moment that he vanished, brilliant lights could suddenly be seen at a point somewhere between the asteroid and Planet East Victory, accompanied by massive rumbling. In the middle of the light was a hole that had been ripped in the void, from which a multicolored glow surged out, as well as deadly ripples. A roar could be heard, which was 19th Uncle, who shot out from within the hole, his hair in disarray, his expression that of rage, and his cultivation base rotating at full power. Next, Meng Hao stepped out from within the hole, surrounded by thunderous roaring.

19th Uncle's face was grim, while Meng Hao's eyes gleamed with an intense light. Moments ago, they had been in the midst of teleportation, when suddenly, the teleportation tunnel collapsed. If 19th Uncle hadn't protected Meng Hao with his powerful cultivation base, then Meng Hao would definitely have been killed.

Almost as soon as 19th Uncle and Meng Hao appeared, ripples began to spread out all around them. In the blink of an eye, nine completely emotionless black-robed figures appeared. From the look of things, they had already calculated any avenues of escape that would be open to 19th Uncle and Meng Hao, and had sealed them off; this was a deadly ambush!

Rumbling echoed out as the nine people attacked in unison... all with peak Immortal Realm power!

“Dammit!” roared 19th Uncle. “You people really have gall! Didn’t you know that was a teleportation portal of the Fang Clan!?” He immediately performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, causing an explosively destructive aura to surge out in all directions.

However, it was at this point that a faint aura suddenly materialized in the void, and then roared out explosively. This aura was not that of the Immortal Realm, but a step beyond that, the early Ancient Realm!

The appearance of this new aura caused 19th Uncle’s face to flicker. He gritted his teeth, and a look of determination appeared on his face. He quickly grabbed Meng Hao and threw him off into the distance, as well as some other object, which turned into a beam of light that followed Meng Hao.

“Hao’er, they’re probably after me. You get out of here, and I’ll come after you later!” 19th Uncle then began to perform a double-handed incantation.

“Great Heavenly Void!” cried out 19th Uncle. His entire body suddenly transformed into an enormous vortex that instantly sucked in the hidden Ancient Realm aura, as well as the nine peak Immortal Realm cultivators. Then, they all vanished.

Everything happened extremely quickly. From the collapse of the teleportation to 19th Uncle unleashing his divine ability and swallowing up his opponents, barely enough time passed to blink an eye.

Meng Hao was panting as he tumbled through the void. The beam of light that had been following him materialized into a flying shuttle, which surrounded Meng Hao and sped off into the distance. The shuttle would provide Meng Hao protection from the starry sky for quite some time.

Meng Hao’s face flickered, and he turned to look back at the spot where 19th Uncle had fought the mysterious assailants. There was nothing to be seen; apparently, Meng Hao was now the only person out here among the stars.

“Were those people after 19th Uncle, or were they... coming after me!?” Meng Hao’s eyes flickered. He was not a novice in the Cultivation world.

Contrariwise, he was extremely discerning. After all, he had traveled the road of cultivation all the way to the peak of Dao Seeking completely on his own power and ability, all without even knowing his father and mother. The tempering he had gone through had left him with shocking willpower and intuition.

Without pausing for a moment, he sent some divine sense into the flying shuttle. After a moment of thought, he realized that while he didn't distrust 19th Uncle, he also knew that if those people weren't targeting him, then he could do whatever he wished right now. However, if they were targeting him, then that meant they had the ability to determine not just 19th Uncle's location, but his own. Therefore... he was not safe in this shuttle.

He decided not to use the shuttle after all. He took a deep breath, gritted his teeth, and then flew out of the shuttle into the starry sky.

As soon as he left the shuttle, a suffocating pressure bore down on him. His body was immediately sent out of balance, and he began to sweat profusely. Fundamentally speaking, anyone who was not Immortal could not tread among the stars.

"I have eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal. I can kill false Immortals as easily as turning over my hand, and I'm actually comparable to a 40-meridian Immortal. Plus, my fleshly body is incredibly powerful. Therefore... I can rely on myself to fly through the stars!"

"Although my speed might not be that great, I can still do it safely!" He lightly tapped the shuttle, sending it flying off in another direction, and splattered some blood onto it at the same time, which instantly transformed into a crude Blood Clone that could not wield divine abilities.

The flying shuttle speedily drifted off into the distance carrying his Blood Clone.

With that, Meng Hao turned into a beam of light that shot off into the distance.

# Chapter 890: Battling Formidable Opponents!

Traveling through this endless void was different than traveling through the Ruins of Immortality. Here, Meng Hao had experienced an intense sensation of weightlessness. Here, things were different.

However, with his cultivation base, Meng Hao was able to quickly adjust and find his center of gravity, then was able to right himself and proceed along stably.

“So, I really can travel among the stars with this cultivation base,” he thought, his eyes glittering. He could not breathe, but to cultivators, merely rotating their cultivation base was enough. He did not need anything from outside his own body to sustain himself.

He tapped his bag of holding to produce the jade slip his father had given him. After scanning it with divine sense, he quickly pulled up the map, and found Planet East Victory. When he found his own location and compared the distance between the two, he realized... that although it didn't look too far away, his current location was actually incredibly remote.

He muttered to himself for a moment, then put the jade slip away and continued speeding along. As he traveled, he would frequently unleash magical techniques and divine abilities, all to get more used to magical combat among the stars.

Several days later, as he proceeded along, his face suddenly flickered. He had just sensed that the Blood Clone he had left in the flying shuttle had disappeared.

“So, they were targeting me after all!” he thought. His eyes flickered with the desire to kill.

At the same time, in another location in the starry sky, two black-robed men hovered there, frowning. They wore the same type of clothing as that which had been worn by the black-robed men from earlier, although they

were clearly not among the ten who had already shown their faces.

In front of them was the wreckage of the flying shuttle. Moments ago, a body could be seen inside the shuttle, but it had vanished, leaving behind only a spatter of blood, which then turned into a mist and faded away.

“What a cunning little son of a bitch,” said one of the men. “I never thought someone so young could be such a profound schemer. He’s really playing it careful.”

“He’s just a Spirit Realm cultivator,” replied the other. “Even if he’s comparable to a false Immortal, with forty or fifty percent of the power of a true Immortal, he won’t be able to get very far. It will be very difficult for him to travel through the starry sky. Let’s split up and look for him. There’s still time to track him down!”

After exchanging a glance, the two men split up and began to search in two different directions with their divine sense.

Each of these men was at the peak of the Immortal Realm. However, they were incapable of opening 80 meridians, and in fact only had 70 or so. That made them stage 7 Immortals, which was their apex .

Meng Hao’s face was grim as he sped along. As he grew more familiar with the starry sky, his speed increased. Soon, there was little difference between this type of travel and moving about on a planet.

Anyone else would be incapable of achieving something like that. However, based on all the experiences Meng Hao had had, he was naturally able to quickly adapt.

“I’m not sure how they managed to interrupt the teleportation process in the first place,” thought Meng Hao, “but it shows that they’re clearly very powerful.

“If 19th Uncle hadn’t unleashed his divine ability, they might have just tried to pin him down, then go after their true target, me!

“Who is it exactly that wants to kill me?” Meng Hao frowned, killing intent flickering in his eyes.

“Could it be those Chosen that I crushed back then on South Heaven? Or was my identity as Fang Mu revealed?

“There’s also another possibility, that the enemy tracked down and destroyed the flying shuttle to simply get rid of witnesses. Maybe they weren’t targeting me.” There was really no way for Meng Hao to be sure, but there was also one other guess as to the enemy’s motives that he had contemplated in silence...but it was an answer that he didn’t dare to lightly consider, and instead, focused on continuing forward at top speed.

Seven days passed, during which time the black-robed men continued to thoroughly search the area. Another black-robed cultivator arrived, making a total of three. Despite their combined efforts, there were no results.

Finally, they met back together to confer.

“Dammit! Did the kid grow wings and fly away? There’s no sign of him anywhere!”

“Maybe he has a magical item that allows him to survive for long periods out in the stars. Let’s widen the area of our search. We absolutely must track him down and kill him!”

“Once we find the son of a bitch, he’s dead for sure!”

The three headed off in different directions to carry out a wider search.

One of them ended up searching the area where Meng Hao actually was.

A few days later, Meng Hao was speeding along when suddenly, his face fell. An intense killing intent exploded out from behind him, and he turned to find a black-robed cultivator closing in on him through the void.

The black-robed man was expressionless, and a flicker of ridicule could be seen within his cold eyes. Before he even got close, his voice echoed out.

“We underestimated you,” he said. “Never thought you could get this far.” As he closed in, the power of a stage seven Immortal exploded out, and a huge statue appeared behind him.

The statue was 21,000 meters tall, and pitch black. It was fearsome in appearance, and looked absolutely nothing like the black-robed man.

He wasn't a true Immortal, but a false Immortal. However, even a false Immortal who had reached the seventh stage, and opened 70 meridians, possessed shocking energy that would pose quite a bit of difficulty for Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and his expression was one of alarm and terror as he edged backward.

"W-what do you want?!" he cried out loudly, his voice quavering. "I'm from the Fang Clan! My father is Fang Xiufeng! How dare you try to kill me!!" It was almost impossible to see in his eyes that he was actually gauging the distance between him and his opponent.

The black-robed man grinned viciously. He didn't respond, but instead got closer, raising his right hand into the air. The eyes of the statue behind him glittered, and it sent its massive hand out toward Meng Hao, clearly intending to crush him to death in a single blow.

Meng Hao stood in place as if he were scared stiff, allowing the huge palm to fall down toward him. At the same time, the black-robed man continued to get closer. He was now less than three hundred meters away.

In that instant, Meng Hao's eyes flickered with killing intent. Three hundred meters was close enough for him to unleash some of his divine abilities. He stretched out his right hand and pointed toward his opponent. Instantly, the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex was unleashed. The starry sky distorted, and the black-robed man was suddenly locked in place.

Blood began to ooze out of Meng Hao's eyes, ears, nose, and mouth, a result of the backlash caused by using this Hex on someone whose cultivation base vastly exceeded his own. However, no look of pain could be seen in his expression, only the desire to kill. His expression grew more and more fierce.

In the same moment that his opponent was locked in place, Meng Hao waved his sleeve. A black beam flew out, along with a astonishing energy, as the crocodile appeared. Shockingly, the crocodile was also comparable

to a stage seven Immortal, and as soon as it appeared, it swished its tail. A boom could be heard as the black-robed man's eyes went wide and blood sprayed from his mouth. Because he was so close to Meng Hao, there was no way for him to dodge. He had no choice but to take the blow straight on and then shoot backward in retreat. The enraged crocodile pounced on him, and they began to fight back and forth.

"Dammit!" said the black-robed man, his face pale. He now realized that he had underestimated his opponent, and had been fooled. The battle hadn't even started, and he was injured, causing his killing intent to boil. He was just about to make an attack, when Meng Hao waved his hand out in a claw-like gesture. Immediately a long spear appeared that had a haft made from the World Tree, and a bone spearhead. Even as he hefted it, his Dharma Idol appeared behind him, and his cultivation base exploded out. Now was not the time to hold back, so in the blink of an eye, his Dharma Idol grew to 12,000 meters.

As soon as the Dharma Idol appeared, the black-robed man's face flickered with disbelief. According to the report he had received, his opponent only had power equivalent to thirty or perhaps fifty percent of that of a true Immortal. However, he was now obviously facing a stage four Immortal, which was especially shocking considering his target... was clearly not in the Immortal Realm.

"No wonder his majesty ordered this kid dead. He's incredibly discerning and cunning, and has a Heaven-defying cultivation base! He can't be left alive!" Astonishment filled the black-robed man's heart as Meng Hao closed in, killing intent glittering in his eyes. Behind him, his Dharma Idol barreled forward, and at the same time, the Mountain Consuming Incantation was unleashed, causing countless mountains to appear, which then linked together to form a mountain range that crushed down onto the black-robed man.

The black-robed man's face fell, and even as he prepared to fight back, the crocodile roared and lunged forward again. The already injured black-robed man was once again forced into retreat.

Rumbling could be heard, and blood poured out of his mouth. However,

it was at this moment that a second black-robed man suddenly appeared, moving toward them at incredible speed. In the blink of an eye, he was upon them. A boom rang out from the shocked Meng Hao's chest as it instantly caved in. He was sent tumbling backward like a kite with its string cut, blood spewing from his mouth.

It didn't matter that Meng Hao's cultivation base was so much lower than the second black-robed man; he attacked him with full power anyway. However, when the man caught sight of Meng Hao again, a look of surprise could be seen on his face.

"Not dead?" His body flickered into motion as he attacked Meng Hao once again.

Meng Hao's chest was wracked with intense pain, and blood flowed from his mouth continuously. His chest was a mangled mess, but his eyes overflowed with killing intent. His Eternal stratum was currently healing him, but even as it did, Meng Hao realized that a third black-robed man had appeared off in the distance.

"There are actually three of them!" he thought, an imperceptible flicker running through his eyes. Temporarily suppressing the restorative power of the Eternal stratum, he transformed into a golden roc to evade the second black-robed man. A boom rang out, and Meng Hao transformed back into human form, blood spraying from his mouth. The second black-robed man frowned and then shot toward Meng Hao once more, utilizing bizarre speed.

However, just when the man was almost upon him, he suddenly extended his right hand, within which appeared the Lightning Cauldron. Electricity danced, and rumbling echoed out as he vanished to switch places with the third black-robed man.

The sudden switch in position aggravated Meng Hao's wound, and blood sprayed from his mouth. As he back up anxiously, the third black-robed man's eyes lit with a bright light.

"Precious treasure!"

A gleam of greed could be seen in the second black-robed man's eyes as

well. He and the third black-robed man employed the full explosive power of a stage seven Immortal at almost the same time. To them, Meng Hao was something that could easily be killed, and yet, even still, they employed all the power they could possibly muster, transforming into beams of light that shot toward Meng Hao in quick succession.

They looked like strings of light flashing through the air, like arrows that, in the blink of an eye, were only thirty meters away from Meng Hao.

"Die!" the second cultivator said coldly. The killing intent in Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and suddenly, his body split in two as his second true self appeared. His second true self stepped forward and spread his hands wide to block, while Meng Hao's true self backed up. Then, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a bronze lamp.

As soon as the bronze lamp appeared, a weak flame flickered inside, and a terrifying aura exploded out. The two black-robed men's faces fell completely.

# Chapter 891: Divine Flame Incinerates Immortals!

The faces of the two men instantly fell, and they immediately wanted to flee. They were in a dangerous situation, but considering the level of their cultivation base, it wasn't impossible to dodge aside. However, it was at this moment that Meng Hao's eyes flickered with a vicious gleam.

He immediately sent out a message with divine will: "Second true self, detonate!!"

His second true self's eyes flickered, and his arms locked in place. In the blink of an eye, he self-detonated. This was the self-detonation of a true Immortal's soul and Meng Hao's fleshly body, as well as the Devilish will inside. A massive explosion shook the stars, and brilliant light spread out in all directions, almost like a sun.

BOOOMMM!

The sudden detonation of Meng Hao's true self was a decisive move that few other people could pull off. However, Meng Hao had practiced cultivation for many years and had experienced many deadly situations. Because of his decisive personality, he didn't hesitate for a moment to detonate his second true self.

The two black-robed cultivators had been on the verge of fleeing, but the self-detonation was something that shook even them. Blood sprayed from their mouths as they lost their chance to retreat.

At the same time, raging killing intent could be seen in Meng Hao's eyes. He held out the ancient bronze lamp and then blew. A tiny bit of his breath brushed against the lamp, causing the flame inside to suddenly expand. Instantly, a flame sea sprang into being in front of Meng Hao.

The stars trembled as the flame sea raged.

It didn't spread out very far, only a few dozen meters. However, within that space, the shocking flames caused everything to ripple and distort. From a distance, the sea of flames resembled an enormous fiery butterfly,

spreading destruction as it fluttered its wings.

The two black-robed men let out miserable screams. They tried to use magical items to defend themselves, but even the third black-robed man's treasures were instantly destroyed. Flames engulfed their bodies, and their skin cracked and burned.

The potency of the flame went beyond even Meng Hao's expectations. In the end, it only took a few breaths of time for the fire to completely incinerate the two black-robed men, who had actually excelled in terms of speed. One of them, in the moment before his death, glared at Meng Hao viciously, then used some unique divine ability to rapidly wither his own body and send a burst of energy out.

"We die together!" he howled. The energy surged toward Meng Hao, enveloping him.

Meng Hao's entire body began to tremble; massive power began to shred his skin. In the exact same moment that his body exploded, his Eternal stratum surged into action. The only thing left behind was the bronze lamp. By that time, the second black-robed man finally transformed into ash, and his soul dispersed. In the last instant before he died, no regret could be seen in his eyes; he had accomplished his mission.

The two men were incinerated, even their bags of holding and very bones transformed into nothing but ash.

Any presence of their existence was completely blotted out.

Off in the distance, the first black-robed man was still tangling with the crocodile. When he saw what had just happened, his jaw dropped in disbelief and terror.

"What fire is that!?!?"

He could never have imagined that the person he was going up against would be so terrifying. In order to kill him, two of his compatriots, both stage seven Immortals, had been killed, and had even been forced to attempt to end their own lives to accomplish the mission.

Those flames left the black-robed man's face completely ashen, and his

heart pounding. He was now even more frightened than before, and was actually rejoicing that he hadn't been so hasty in his attack earlier. If he had been, he would most likely be dead now.

"This Meng Hao was vicious! He actually detonated his own clone to kill his opponents! Were it not for his decisiveness, the two of them would have been able to flee. With their cultivation bases, they shouldn't have been destroyed in body and spirit.

"If this kid hadn't met such an early end, then he would definitely have become famous throughout the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

"Well, it's too bad that he did die!" A look of greed appeared in the man's eyes. Even as he fought with the crocodile, he looked over at the bronze lamp, which had a slice of bloody flesh laying across it. Next to it was Meng Hao's bag of holding.

"That precious treasure belongs to me now! Also that Lightning Cauldron with the transposition powers!

"Plus, now I will get all the credit for killing Meng Hao!" However, it was in this moment of excitement that his face suddenly filled with disbelief. Voice hoarse, he said, "Impossible!"

In that moment, the shredded, bloody pieces of Meng Hao's body formed back together. An ancient aura spread out that carried the feeling of Eternity. In only a moment, Meng Hao was completely formed anew!

His face was pale, but his eyes flickered with the desire to kill. He looked up at the black-robed man, his expression icy, as if he were looking at a dead man. The black-robed man's face fell and, despite the level of his cultivation, he was filled with terror and wanted to flee. Unfortunately for him, the crocodile went crazy to block his way.

Meng Hao coldly patted his bag of holding to produce a set of clothing, which he quickly donned. Then he put the bronze lamp back into his bag of holding. The spark inside was clearly much dimmer; it would probably only be usable once or twice more.

After putting everything in order, Meng Hao looked at the spot where his

second true self had detonated. He waved his hand, causing all of the bits of blood and flesh to fly toward him. The soul of the true Immortal had not completely dissipated, although it had been reduced to only ten percent of its former power. All that was left of his body was a lump of gore, within which was the fully coalesced Devilish will. The whole thing resembled a black heart.

After sealing it and putting it away, Meng Hao headed toward the crocodile and the black-robed man.

He had sustained heavy losses in this fight, but thanks to his Eternal stratum, he was anything but dead.

The black-robed man looked at him, his heart filled with fear. Meng Hao looked like some ancient fiend as he slowly approached.

The black-robed man was filled with shock, and had already sustained injuries. His heart was in chaos as the crocodile suddenly bit down on his right leg, causing cracking sounds to emanate out as the leg was shattered. It was in that moment that Meng Hao arrived, a red vortex beneath his feet. The vortex grew larger and larger until it resembled a sea of blood.

“Come no closer!” howled the black-robed man. He tried to retreat, but the crocodile had him pinned down, and he was injured again. By this point, he couldn’t even unleash the full power of his cultivation base; he was now at the level of a stage five Immortal.

Meng Hao moved forward with incredible speed, the blood sea beneath his feet growing larger and larger. In the end, the sea of blood churned in a massive vortex that surrounded Meng Hao, until he wasn’t even visible anymore.

BOOM!

The black-robed man performed an incantation, unleashing a divine ability that slammed into the sea of blood. It began to fall apart, but then reformed. The black-robed man’s face was pale white, as he performed constant incantation gestures and constant attacks. He continued to try to retreat, and was continually harassed and injured by the crocodile.

His will to fight had long since vanished. Seeing his two companions die had struck quite a blow, and then Meng Hao had returned to life, which was an even more intense shock.

Furthermore, no matter how he attacked, Meng Hao's blood sea vortex couldn't be destroyed. Every time the vortex began to fall apart, it would quickly recover. In the space of a few breaths of time, the blood sea vortex reached the black-robed man and then began to envelop him.

Booms rang out, accompanied by the black-robed man's muffled, bloodcurdling shrieks. The vortex collapsed, but then exploded back out. Every time it collapsed, it reformed, until gradually, the screams grew weaker. After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, the cries faded away.

After a moment, the blood sea began to shrink back down, transforming into Meng Hao once again. In front of him was the desiccated corpse of the black-robed man, who stared up with wide, vacant eyes. His flesh and blood, cultivation base, and even soul had been sucked dry.

Meng Hao's face was a bit flushed as he hovered there among the stars, eyes closed. After a long moment, he opened his eyes, and he looked exhausted. Yet, within that exhaustion could be seen the desire to kill.

"So, they're actually from... the Fang Clan!!" In the end, Meng Hao had used one of the abilities of the ultimate form of the Blood Demon Grand Magic, a terrifying divine ability with potentially fatal side-effects, that required only a bit of time to perform.

It was an ability that left him completely vulnerable to outside attack, which was why he had never used it before, a divine ability that allowed him to completely absorb the victim's memories.

"How cute," he thought, "and what a lovely clan. I haven't even arrived yet, and they've already sent people to kill me....

"Clearly, someone doesn't want me to get back to the Fang Clan alive....

"It's too bad that someone used a memory-wiping technique on this black-robed cultivator, making it impossible to determine who gave the

orders to kill me. Clearly that person truly fears me." Meng Hao smiled, although it was a somewhat sinister smile.

As of now, he was no longer the Meng Hao who, after reuniting with his father and mother, could rely on their help. He was back to his old self, running wild, with only himself to depend on.

"The more somebody wants to prevent me from getting back alive, the more I want to get to the Fang Clan," he thought, his eyes flickering with murderous intent. Gradually, the killing intent faded into the recesses of his mind. He opened the black-robed man's bag of holding, but there was nothing inside other than a flying shuttle.

The flying shuttle operated on spirit stones, and would enable to him to make his way through the stars. As long as he had spirit stones, it would work. Unfortunately, because of the quality with which it was constructed, and the spell formations that it operated, its effectiveness was limited. However, higher quality spirit stones would enable it to move much faster

After he saw the flying shuttle, Meng Hao examined it closely, and realized he had no other options. He quickly branded it with divine sense, then waved his hand, causing the shuttle to grow larger. When it reached thirty meters in length, he sat down inside of it, then, suppressing the pain he felt, placed a high-grade spirit stone down onto its surface. Rumbling could be heard as the shuttle then began to move forward.

Meanwhile, in another location in the starry sky, another black-robed man whose cultivation base exceeded the Immortal Realm suddenly stopped in his tracks. He lifted his right hand, and three shattered jade slips appeared within it.

"Dead? I sent those three to kill a Spirit Realm cultivator, and they ended up getting killed...? Did someone else interfere?" After a moment of silence, the black-robed man continued onward at top speed, intending to search for Meng Hao personally.

"In order to have Meng Hao killed, his excellency even sent people to keep Prince 19 from interfering. All just for this chance. Failure is not an option. Meng Hao... must die! He must not get to Planet East Victory

alive!"

# Chapter 892: East Heaven Gate

The flying shuttle was a beam of bright light that shot through the starry sky at a speed far, far greater than that Meng Hao was capable of achieving. At the same time, the rate with which it consumed spirit stones was terrifying.

Meng Hao's heart hurt, but he had no other options at his disposal. He could only continue to feed the high-grade Spirit Stones into the slot.

This type of flight method was something most people only used over short distances. To use it over a long period of time in the way Meng Hao was using it right now was quite rare.

"Just to be safe...." Meng Hao patted his bag of holding and the meat jelly appeared. It immediately began to jabber on and on but, this time, no matter what Meng Hao said in response, it wouldn't agree to help him.

Having no other choice, he finally produced the copper mirror and brought out the parrot.

As soon as it emerged, it began to wail and shout.

"Dammit, Haowie! Dammit!" it cried, seemingly on the verge of tears. "Dammit, Lord Fifth is finally out!" It had been sealed in the mirror for a long time; from its perspective, it seemed almost like 10,000 years. Now that it was free, it flew out squawking.

Meng Hao looked at the meat jelly and the parrot, and suddenly felt a headache coming on.

"Have the meat jelly change my appearance again," he said. "Otherwise I'll seal you back inside."

The parrot was enraged and refused to cooperate, but then it thought of the pain of being sealed away, and recalled being unable to have furred and feathered lovers, and was suddenly extremely frightened.

Finally, they reached an agreement. As long as the parrot agreed not to do anything out of line, it wouldn't be sealed away again. It immediately flew up to the meat jelly and began to arrogantly use some unknown

method to get the meat jelly to suddenly look very anxious. Finally, with a dour expression on its face, it helped Meng Hao change his appearance, as well as the appearance of the flying shuttle.

The flying shuttle then whooshed away, taking a circuitous route toward Planet East Victory, instead of heading directly toward it.

Several days later, the black-robed man with a cultivation base exceeding the Immortal Realm appeared in the location where Meng Hao had fought the other black-robed men. After looking around for a moment, he was visibly moved.

“What flame was it that burned them up...?

“Don’t tell me he has a Dao Protector who cultivates a flame power of the Ancient Realm!” An unsightly expression appeared on the man’s face. After a moment, he sent his divine sense out, but couldn’t find any traces of Meng Hao. Most importantly, he couldn’t detect Meng Hao’s aura, and thus couldn’t lock down a specific area in which to search for him.

Finding someone in the middle of space is like looking for a needle in the middle of an ocean.

“If I say you can’t escape, then escape you shall not!” said the man with a cold harrumph. He lifted his right hand, within which could be seen an archaic turtle shell which was obviously very, very old.

“His excellency even gave me this precious treasure to use, all for the purpose of seeing you dead! With this item, I can definitely track you down.” Eyes glittering, he slowly raised up the turtle shell and began to chant a complicated, awkward-sounding incantation. Finally, he spit out some blood onto it.

“Fang Hao!” he growled. The turtle shell sucked in the blood and then began to quiver. Slowly, bubbles began to rise up from it, and images floated within each of them.

The black-robed man stared intently at the bubbles, chuckling coldly. He was very confident that this strange treasure would be able to find Meng Hao because of the clan blood that ran in his veins.

A moment later, the treasure began to shine with flickering light, and Meng Hao's image appeared. However, in the exact moment that he appeared...

The strange treasure began to shake, as if during the process of searching for Meng Hao, it had encountered some indescribable force of interference. Then a boom could be heard as the treasure exploded into countless fragments.

As it exploded, a shocking aura surged out from the treasure that caused the black-robed man to tremble, and a roaring sound to fill his mind.

It happened so quickly that he didn't have time to react. The force of the explosion sent him flying thirty thousand meters away, where he coughed up three mouthfuls of blood. A look of shock filled his face.

"His fate is untraceable?!" he said, his face ashen. Then he thought of the aura just now, and his scalp went numb.

Time passed. Three months. The atmosphere in the Fang Clan on Planet East Victory was a strange one during that time. Three months before, a clan member had been set to return, and yet no one showed up.

The welcoming ceremony was cancelled. Eventually, they realized they had lost contact with Prince 19, who had been sent to escort the direct bloodline grandson back. His disappearance made the atmosphere even stranger than before.

All of the members of the direct bloodline were furious. Many of them even left Planet East Victory to conduct searches of their own, but it was all in vain.

It wasn't just the direct bloodline clan members who went out searching. Ordinary clan members also went out to search for Meng Hao. Of course, the black-robed men were out searching as well, to find either Meng Hao or his corpse.

No one dared to deliver the news to Fang Xiufeng on Planet South Heaven. When Prince 19 finally returned and made his report to the Grand Elder, his face was extremely dark.

The Grand Elder appeared to be enraged, and even personally went out to where the teleportation tunnel had collapsed. Eventually, he determined that it had been an ambush set up by a sect who had harbored enmity with Prince 19.

The fact that Meng Hao had been dragged into this situation caused quite an uproar, and the Fang Clan eventually sent some experts to destroy the offending sect completely, which was quite a shock.

After three months with no news from Meng Hao, his 19th Uncle wallowed in guilt on a daily basis. He would constantly go out to search for Meng Hao, but never found anything. 19th Uncle felt especially guilty towards Fang Xiufeng, but didn't dare tell him about the matter.

Of course, he had been scared of his older cousin from the time he was small, and knew exactly what type of personality he had. If Fang Xiufeng found out what had happened, who knew what could happen as a result. One thing was for sure... a catastrophic storm would definitely occur.

Slowly, things calmed down in the Fang Clan. Fewer people went out to search for Meng Hao, until eventually, only the direct bloodline members were interested in the matter.

The Fang Clan was huge, and the direct bloodline had once been at the peak of glory. Meng Hao's grandfather had a monstrous cultivation base, there were other direct bloodline Patriarchs, and of course Meng Hao's father was a Chosen who struck awe into the hearts of everyone in his generation.

Now, however, Meng Hao's grandfather was missing, the other direct bloodline Patriarchs were reaching the point of Nirvanic Rebirth, and were in secluded meditation, and Fang Xiufeng had gone to Planet South Heaven.

In addition to all that, Meng Hao, the eldest grandson, had been born crippled. Gradually, the direct bloodline was now losing its power and influence. Before, it had been at the height of power, but now, only about ten percent of the other clan members were still loyal to the direct bloodline.

As the direct bloodline declined, auxiliary bloodlines rose. There was one bloodline in particular from which the Chosen Fang Wei descended. His father, and other Patriarchs of the bloodline, were shining radiantly, and in the past few hundred years, had worked hard in service of the clan. Their reputations had even spread outside the clan, and therefore, their power only continued to grow. Soon, they commanded the loyalty of roughly thirty percent of the clan.

The remaining sixty percent remained in a position of neutrality, maintaining their own power structures and assisting each other as needed.

An entire half year passed. It was now almost a year since Meng Hao had gone missing. By now, even the direct bloodline had little hope that he would return, and ceased virtually all searching.

Even the cultivators in the black robes gave up, having assumed that Meng Hao died out in space. Not even the black-robed expert whose cultivation base exceeded the Immortal Realm was able to find traces of Meng Hao. Space is an enormous place, and it was impossible to completely lock down the starry sky which surrounded Planet East Victory; there was simply too much activity there.

Planet East Victory gradually returned to normal, and people stopped thinking about Meng Hao.

On one particular day, two thirty-meter flying shuttles limped and tottered into the starry sky outside Planet East Victory. As they gradually approached the planet, Meng Hao could be seen sitting cross-legged in one of the shuttles. His clothes were in tatters, and his face was withered and yellow. However, his eyes shone brightly. At first glance, he seemed to cut a sorry figure, but deep in his eyes, he seemed even more powerful than when he had left Planet South Heaven.

He had been traveling for nearly a year to get to the planet up ahead; at long last, he was almost there.

The number of spirit stones he had wasted had reached a shocking level. Whenever he thought about it, he gnashed his teeth, and his heart hurt

painfully.

Throughout the year of travel, he had been forced to be extremely cautious in order to avoid being tracked down and killed. Even so, he had faced many dangers and run into many evil cultivators. Magical battles had ensued on multiple occasions.

It could even be said that he had experienced tough training throughout that year. He quickly forgot about the protection he had enjoyed from his father and mother. Once again, he experienced what it was like to be on his own.

"Finally... I can see Planet East Victory with my own eyes!" he thought, looking at the planet up ahead. It was huge, composed of about thirty percent blue ocean water, and seventy percent land. One of the continents spread out over nearly half the planet, was red in color, and emanated a bizarre aura.

The planet also had a glowing ring surrounding it, composed of countless drifting asteroids. The sight was spectacular.

As he looked over the scene, Meng Hao was shocked to find that there were cultivators sitting cross-legged in meditation on many of the asteroids. There were even some asteroids that had Immortal's caves cut into them.

The planet seemed to teem with powerful experts, and their shocking auras combined together to emanate dazzlingly out into the starry sky.

Without even setting foot onto the planet, Meng Hao was able to tell that it was a flourishing place. Countless cultivators entered and exited the planet. Colorful beams of light flashed to and fro, and the whole scene looked very different than Planet South Heaven, causing a cold light to shine in Meng Hao's eyes.

A young man sat cross-legged in the flying shuttle next to Meng Hao's. Smiling, he used divine will to transmit a message to Meng Hao.

"Elder Brother Meng, this is Planet East Victory. Once you take care of your affairs, don't forget to come visit me in the Medicine Immortal Sect. I

can introduce you to some nice friends.”

The young man’s name was Feng Xun. Meng Hao had rescued him from the clutches of a gang of rogue cultivators, for which Feng Xun had been eternally grateful. After they had begun chatting, Meng Hao found out that he was a disciple of the Medicine Immortal Sect. Upon hearing that Meng Hao was traveling to Planet East Victory, he had immediately volunteered to personally escort Meng Hao there.

“Many thanks, Elder Brother Feng,” Meng Hao replied with a smile. “I definitely will.” As he looked at Planet East Victory, the bright light in his eyes suddenly turned cold.

“According to my analysis,” he thought, “the people in the Fang Clan who tried to kill me are definitely also afraid of my father. There seem to be some other reasons as well. Perhaps because of certain clan affairs, they feared anyone finding that they were the ones who killed me if they succeeded.

“That’s why they lured 19th Uncle away, and then sent those black-robed men to kill me. Plus... those men had their memories erased, which lends proof to my speculation.

“Well then, although the Fang Clan might seem to be a dangerous place for me, I should actually be pretty safe there. They won’t dare to kill me right in the middle of the clan!

“I have a high position in the Fang clan, so they definitely wouldn’t be so bold as to do something in the open.” Chuckling coldly, Meng Hao sent the flying shuttle closer to Planet East Victory. As soon as he neared, a powerful divine sense shot out from the planet. It swept over him, then vanished and transformed into a vortex.

Simultaneously, a cold voice transmitted into his ear.

“Foreign cultivator: enter the vortex up ahead of you, and it will take you to the planet. Prepare your travel permits and jade identification plaque.”

An imperceptible gleam flickered in Meng Hao’s eyes. A vortex had appeared in front of Feng Xun as well. Looking around, Meng Hao saw

similar scenes playing out with other arriving cultivators. Apparently, this was how things worked on Planet East Victory.

"Elder Brother Meng, there are a lot of rules on Planet East Victory. Everyone who arrives here is treated like this. If you have no travel permits and no identification plaque, then you'll have to pay dozens of times as many spirit stones, but will still be able to enter. Of course, the amount of spirit stones you pay will depend on how long you plan to stay on the planet."

"If you try to force your way in, you'll be killed."

"There's really nothing you can do about it. The entire planet is under the power of the Fang Clan. Years ago, Lord Ji actually gave the entire place to them...." Smiling wryly, Feng Xun collected his flying shuttle, clasped hands to Meng Hao, and stepped into the vortex.

After a moment of thought, Meng Hao also put his flying shuttle away and stepped into the vortex.

Glittering light filled his eyes, and when everything became clear, he was no longer out in space. A sparkling shield of light stretched out beneath his feet, allowing him to see the lands below.

Directly in front of him was an enormous gate!

The gate was thirty thousand meters tall, forged from bronze, and was completely ancient in appearance. Carved with designs that appeared to have come from ancient times, it was completely shocking. However, if you looked at it closely, the images on the gate would be too blurry to make out.

There were three characters inscribed on top of the gate that were visible to all.

East Heaven Gate!

It was just a gate, but when Meng Hao looked at it, his pupils constricted. This gate... actually resembled the Door of Immortality.

Arranged in formation in front of the gate were over a hundred

cultivators, looking around coldly at the over 1,000 other people who were lined up, waiting to enter.

On either side of East Heaven Gate were three other gates, much smaller. One of those gates was inscribed with the characters Puppet God, and on the other was a carving of a Blood Orchid.

The last gate was special. It looked archaic and bizarre, but it pulsed with a power that stimulated the bloodline power within Meng Hao.

Feng Xun appeared next to Meng Hao and began to explain.

“Elder Brother Meng, this is East Heaven Gate. Those other two gates are for the Church of the Puppet God and the Church of the Blood Immortal. The last one... is only for children of the Fang Clan.”

# Chapter 893: Might As Well Make a Scene!

East Heaven Gate was the only gate that had large numbers of cultivators lined up outside of it. The gates for the Church of the Puppet Immortal and the Church of the Blood Orchid had no lines whatsoever, nor did the Fang Clan's gate.

"Elder Brother Meng, the only way to get onto Planet East Victory is by going through this gate. I'm actually from Planet East Victory, and even though the Medicine Immortal Sect has no gate, I have special privileges. However, since this is your first time here, I'll wait in line with you." Feng Xun ended his words by clasping hands and bowing.

Meng Hao clasped hands in thanks and the two of them took their place at the end of the line. He looked around at everything that was happening and mused about how completely different this was from Planet South Heaven.

Planet East Victory was huge, and in terms of how it was guarded, as well as how orderly everything was, there was a sense of sternness to everything. There also seemed to be an excess of rules.

Any cultivator who entered the Planet was carefully inspected. Only members of the sects from Planet East Victory enjoyed any sort of special treatment, and the most special treatment of all went to the Fang Clan.

As Meng Hao stood at the end of the line, he noticed that virtually all of the cultivators around him were in the Immortal Realm, although the majority were only stage two or three. There were few who were stage five or higher. Furthermore, although there seemed to be large numbers of them, they were all False Immortals.

After all, only cultivators in the Immortal Realm could step out into the starry sky. Cultivators in the Spirit Realm could only go there temporarily.

As time passed, the cultivators in line slowly passed through East Heaven Gate. Meng Hao remained in place, his expression calm, as he

watched the cultivators handing over spirit stones in exchange for jade medallions.

Occasionally, miscellaneous cultivators from the Church of the Puppet God or the Church of the Blood Orchid would return from the stars, and would disappear into the gates specially set up for their sects. Every so often, people would leave from those gates as well.

Four hours passed rather quickly. Soon, Meng Hao was toward the front of the line, with only about seven people ahead of him. It didn't take long until their turn arrived. It was in this moment that ripples suddenly spread out up above in the starry sky. In the blink of an eye, eight streaks of light shot down.

They were eight cultivators, dressed in luxurious clothing, laughing and chatting as they proceeded along, as comfortable as if they were walking through the garden of their own house. The two cultivators in the lead position seemed to be in high spirits, full of energy and with extraordinary cultivation bases. They emanated an air of elitism.

"Look, people from the Fang Clan!" Feng Xun whispered to Meng Hao. "I recognize the two in the front. They're from a collateral bloodline of the Fang Clan that is second only to the direct branch of the clan."

The cultivators in the area immediately began to whisper to each other. Meng Hao's expression didn't change, though a barely detectable flicker could be seen in his eyes.

When the hundred or so cultivators gathered in front of the East Heaven Gate saw the eight newcomers, their expressions turned solemn. They immediately stepped forward, clasped hands, and bowed deeply.

"Greetings, Princes."

The two cultivators in the lead position among the eight smiled and turned back to a young woman among their number.

"Junior Sister Hong," one of them said, smiling, "9th Uncle has been waiting for some time for you to return from your outside training!"

The pretty young woman smiled in response. Then she and the rest of

the group walked past the bowing cultivators, nodding to them as they headed toward the Fang Clan gate. One by one, they passed through the gate, and as they did, glowing beams of light rose up into the air. The height of each beam was different, and when the young woman who had been addressed as Junior Sister Hong stepped through the gate, the light shot up roughly 300 meters into the air.

Expressions of envy could be seen on the faces of the cultivators around Meng Hao as they discussed what was happening in low tones.

“A 300-meter Bloodline Gatebeam! That young woman... she definitely has a high position in the Fang Clan! Could she really be THE Fang Hong!?” 1

“It probably is. The Fang Clan gate only opens for members of the Fang Clan, and the thicker their bloodline is, the higher that beam of light!”

“Last year I was fortunate enough to catch sight of Prince Wei. When he walked through the Fang Clan gate, the Gatebeam was 24,000 meters high! It was spectacular!”

Of course, despite their envy, there was nothing they could do to alter their own bloodline backgrounds. Even if they became Outer Clan disciples, having Fang Clan blood was still an honor they wouldn’t have.

Feng Xun was a disciple from the Medicine Immortal Sect, but even he was sighing in envy. Then he proceeded to explain all the advantages of being a member of the Fang Clan on Planet East Victory to Meng Hao. Of course, despite everything he said, it was still possible to hear how proud he was of his own identity.

“The Fang Clan might be powerful, but I’ll never leave the Medicine Immortal Sect,” he concluded.

Meng Hao listened silently during Feng Xun’s explanation.

Eventually, the bowing cultivators straightened up. Their ingratiating expressions became once again solemn, and they resumed collecting spirit stones from the line of cultivators in exchange for allowing them to enter one by one.

Finally, Meng Hao was standing directly in front of the gate. The cultivator responsible for collecting spirit stones had a black birthmark on his forehead, making him look quite ferocious as he stared coldly at Meng Hao.

“How long do you plan to stay?” he asked. “If you have no identity medallion, then you’ll have to pay 100 spirit stones per day. If you exceed a month, the price increases to 1,000 per day. After two months, the price is 10,000 per day.”

Meng Hao frowned. He had heard the prices mentioned earlier, when he was further back in line, and they seemed extremely expensive. In contrast, if you did possess an identity medallion, then the price was only 10 spirit stones per day.

“I have no identity plaque,” Meng Hao muttered, holding out a hundred spirit stones.

“One day?” The cultivator with the black birthmark grinned slightly. Over the years, he had encountered many cultivators who had claimed to only plan to stay one day, but who actually intended to stay longer, and just wanted to avoid paying the spirit stones.

People like that were eventually arrested by the Fang Clan, and then ended up paying even more spirit stones.

The man looked Meng Hao up and down, then tossed him a white command medallion and looked at Feng Xun, who stood further back.

Feng Xun’s demeanor was different now than the one he used with Meng Hao. He looked a bit proud and arrogant as he threw his medallion over to the man. As soon as the cultivator saw the command medallion, his face broke into a smile, and, although he didn’t clasp hands the way he had for the members of the Fang Clan, obviously treated him differently than Meng Hao.

Meng Hao held the white command medallion in his hand and walked toward East Heaven Gate. Just as he stepped into the gate, a powerful repelling force surged out, enveloping him and ejecting him from within the gate.

This scene immediately caused expressions of sympathy to appear on the faces of the cultivators in line. Feng Xun gaped in shock, then suddenly seemed to realize something, and involuntarily frowned. As for the cultivators standing guard outside the gate, their cultivation bases exploded with power and they immediately surrounded Meng Hao.

“Ejected by East Heaven Gate, huh? Seems you must have some evil intentions! Come with us. If the investigation proves that you’re innocent, then you’ll obviously be set free!”

“East Heaven Gate only rejects people who harbor malicious thoughts. Your cultivation base isn’t very high, so if you resist us, we’ll just kill you!”

The guard cultivators all stared at him with cold eyes.

Meng Hao frowned and looked down at the identity plaque he held. A moment ago, he had clearly sensed that the reason he had been obstructed by East Heaven Gate was because of the jade medallion, not he himself.

Feng Xun immediately approached, not hesitating to mention his status as he smoothed the matter over. After he finished speaking, the cultivator with the black birth mark, the one who had given Meng Hao the jade plaque, spoke up.

“Since Fellow Daoist Feng here is willing to vouch for you, we can forgo the investigation. Just hand over 10,000 spirit stones as bail, and we’ll forget the matter.” His eyes overflowed with scorn as he looked at Meng Hao. He was convinced that a person like Meng Hao, with no identity medallion and a low cultivation base, had obviously run into trouble outside, and was now attempting to seek refuge on Planet East Victory.

Had Meng Hao been generous to begin with, and just handed over 10,000 spirit stones to purchase the right to stay there, then he wouldn’t have caused any problems for him. However, he was obviously seeking a favor from Planet East Victory, and yet at the same time was being stingy. Whenever the cultivators who guarded the gate ran into people like this, they would make sure to teach them a lesson.

Of course, if Meng Hao had an incredible cultivation base, then they wouldn’t dare to do something like that. But with his current cultivation

base, he was definitely the type they would give a hard time to.

If it weren't for the fact that they wouldn't do anything to offend Feng Xun personally, they would definitely do everything they could to take advantage of Meng Hao.

Killing intent flickered in Meng Hao's eyes. He had never imagined that just being a little stingy and handing over too few spirit stones for the toll would cause such a fuss.

Especially since... this was his home, the Fang Clan of Planet East Victory.

Especially since... he had experienced numerous twists and turns on his journey here, and had even had people trying to track him down and kill him. All of those things which had been brewing in Meng Hao's heart were now on the verge of causing him to explode.

Originally, his plan had been to get onto Planet East Victory, look around a bit, and then go to the Fang Clan. But as of this moment, he changed his mind. Now that he had finally arrived at Planet East Victory, he actually needn't keep a low profile any more. It was time for him to see who it was that actually dared to try to kill him!

He chuckled coldly, slapped his bag of holding, and caused 10,000 spirit stones to trickle out and form a small mountain.

The surrounding cultivators who guarded East Heaven Gate looked on with snide smiles. The man with the black birthmark made a grasping motion to collect the spirit stones. Then he looked scornfully at Meng Hao and threw him a jade plaque.

"If you'd done this to begin with you could have saved yourself a lot of trouble. Now, you may enter Planet East Victory."

Feng Xun quickly walked over to Meng Hao and murmured, "I forgot to mention this earlier, Elder Brother Meng. These aren't ordinary guards, they're Outer Clan members of the Fang Clan.... If you had just spent a bit more money, then they wouldn't have given you a hard time."

"But, you only bought one day on the planet, and you didn't even have an

identity medallion....” Inwardly, Feng Xun was shaking his head; were it not for the fact that Meng Hao had saved his life before, he would never have intervened and vouched for him.

Meng Hao’s expression was the same as ever as he looked at Feng Xun and coolly said, “Many thanks for your assistance in this matter, Elder Brother Feng. However, on Planet East Victory, if somebody takes my spirit stones, they will pay me back a hundredfold.”

His words caused Feng Xun to gape.

Meng Hao turned and headed, not toward East Heaven Gate, but rather, in the direction of the Fang Clan’s gate.

This immediately caused all of the cultivators in the area to stare him shock.

The more than one hundred gate guards were also looking on in astonishment.

“Is this guy crazy? He’s actually heading toward the Fang Clan’s gate?”

The man with the black birthmark sneered and said, “How reckless! Well, if he tries to force his way through the Fang Clan gate, then he’ll be crushed to death. We don’t have to do anything.”

Feng Xun’s face fell and he immediately hurried forward.

“Elder Brother Meng, it’s... it’s impossible for you to enter this gate! If you don’t have the blood of the Fang Clan in you, then you’ll be killed!!”

Meng Hao paid him no heed, and in the blink of an eye, was in front of the gate. While all the other cultivators looked on in astonishment, he lifted his foot and stepped into the gate.

\*

1. Fang Hong’s name in Chinese is 方虹 fāng hóng. Hong means ‘rainbow’.

# Chapter 894: His Bloodline Shakes the Clan!

Discussions immediately broke out among the onlookers outside of East Heaven Gate.

“This guy is nuts....”

“If he doesn’t have Fang Clan blood, then he’s dead for sure! But, if he does possess a Fang Clan bloodline, then why would he wait in line and even pay a spirit stone tax?”

“Maybe he has some other way to get through the Fang Clan’s gate. But wait, that’s not possible! No matter what you do, even if you’re from the Fang clan itself, you can’t hide your bloodline. Anyone who isn’t from the Fang Clan will definitely be killed by that gate.”

The over one hundred Fang Outer Clan members standing guard outside the gate looked on with cold smiles, especially the cultivator with the black birthmark, whose eyes especially shone with scorn.

“You went looking to die, so you can’t blame anyone else,” he sneered. “Fellow Daoist Feng, it’s not that I didn’t give you face, sir. I already gave him permission to enter East Heaven Gate, and yet, he’s choosing to kill himself.”

Feng Xun stamped his foot, and then an anxious expression appeared on his face. However, there was nothing he could do.

It was in this moment that Meng Hao began to step into the Fang Clan’s gate. Only half of his foot had actually entered the gate when it began to rumble.

“It’s going to crush him to death!” said the cultivator with the black birthmark, a coldly sinister smile plastered across his face. A moment later, that smile suddenly froze, then turned into an expression of disbelief. Everyone else who was discussing the matter also stopped, and their eyes went wide.

The more than one hundred Outer Clan disciples who were guarding East Heaven Gate stared with open mouths.

Feng Xun's eyes flickered with shock, and his brain filled with roaring as he gasped in astonishment.

Everyone could clearly see that as Meng Hao stood there, the gate trembled and... began to shine with light.

It took only a moment for a 300-meter beam of light to rise up, completely filling the pupils of all onlookers with glittering reflected light.

"Impossible!" said the cultivator with the black birthmark, his voice hoarse. He suddenly began to quiver.

The more than one hundred cultivators guarding East Heaven Gate gasped, and their minds reeled.

The crowds immediately went into an uproar.

"A 300-meter Gatebeam! Heavens! He's a member of the Fang Clan, and not an ordinary one at that! The fact that he has a 300-meter Gatebeam shows that his bloodline exceeds that of an ordinary clan member!"

"If he's a member of the Fang Clan, then why did he try to go through East Heaven Gate?"

It was then that the crowds fell silent.

As soon as Meng Hao's foot touched onto the ground, and half of his body entered the gate, the beam of light shot up... from 300 meters to 3,000 meters, accompanied by deafening rumbling sounds.

The 3,000-meter Gatebeam was spectacular to behold, and all of the cultivators outside of East Heaven Gate felt as if they couldn't breathe. They stared in shock and disbelief, their minds reeling.

"A 3,000-meter Gatebeam.... Heavens! He's a Chosen of the Fang Clan!!"

"Who is he? A cultivator with 3,000-meter Bloodline Gatebeam can't be a nobody! He must have a high status in the Fang Clan!"

The cultivator with the black birthmark staggered backward a few steps,

his face deathly pale, and a feeling of intense regret rose up in his heart. He even felt resentful.

“Y-y-you... you’re actually a member of the Fang Clan!” he thought, panting continuously. “With a bloodline like that, why would you go through East Heaven Gate!? Why did you have to make trouble for me...? Well, even if you do have a 3,000-meter Bloodline Gatebeam, I was just enforcing the law as I should have, so my actions were justifiable!” Even still, his heart was filled with intense apprehension.

Feng Xun stood there gaping at Meng Hao, unable to even speak.

If that were all there were to the matter, it wouldn’t be a big deal. But then, Meng Hao finished stepping into the gate, which caused the rumbling sounds to increase, and the beam of light to shoot higher into the air.

3,000 meters. 4,500 meters. 6,000 meters. 7,500 meters....

In the space of only a few breaths of time, the beam of light reached a height of 9,000 meters!

A plopping sound could be heard as the cultivator with the black birthmark suddenly seemed to lose all of his cultivation base and strength. He sat down onto the ground, his face as pale as a corpse’s, without the slightest sign of color.

“9... 9,000 meters!!” he thought. “Finished. I’m finished! If... if it were only 3,000 meters, I could still say I was just enforcing the law, but he... he has a 9,000-meter Bloodline Gatebeam. A clan member like that, I... I....”

He wasn’t the only one who was acting like that. The Fang Outer Clan members who had surrounded him earlier and mocked him coldly were now looking on with fallen faces. Their scalps were numb, and they were terrified.

The rest of the people standing outside of the gate were watching with wide eyes and slack jaws, their minds trembling.

“9... 9,000 meters.... What bloodline is that? That’s second only to the number one Chosen in the Fang Clan, Prince Wei. When Prince Wei

entered the door, his Gatebeam reached 24,000 meters!!”

“Who is this guy...?”

It wasn’t just the people outside the gate who were shocked. In the Fang Clan’s ancestral mansion in Planet East Victory, there was a huge bell. Moments ago, that bell had begun to toll. The sound of it rang out through all of the clan’s various branches. No outsider could hear it; it rang out only in the minds of the members of the Fang Clan.

In the main hall of the ancestral mansion, an old man with a full head of white hair sat cross-legged in meditation. His expression was solemn, and when he opened his eyes, his gaze was profound, and his eyes flickered like lightning. Sitting in front of him were eight other people, all of whom were engaged in a discussion.

When the bell tolled, the faces of all of the men in the main hall flickered, and they looked up.

“Someone with a strong bloodline just entered the Fang Gate and has invoked the toll of the bell!!”

“The Dao Bell only tolls when a clan member enters the gate for the first time, and a Bloodline Gatebeam of 3,000 meters or higher appears!”

“What member of the junior generation has gone to test out their bloodline?”

Everyone was shocked, and the old man sitting up front looked up, suspicion flickering in his eyes.

When members of the Fang Clan came of age, they would enter the Fang Gate to test their bloodline. The Dao Bell would only ring the first time they did so.

As of this moment, there were many locations within the Fang Clan in which expressions of surprise could be heard. Meng Hao’s 19th Uncle was currently sitting cross-legged next to a lake, clutching a flagon of alcohol, his face glum and anguished. When the bell tolled, he almost didn’t seem to hear it, and just kept drinking. Off to the side, a young man with a bitter expression on his face hung upside down in midair.

In another location was a stretch of pitch black land from which a volcano rose up. Sitting cross-legged deep inside the volcano was a middle-aged man, whose eyes suddenly snapped open and began to shine with brilliant light.

In another area, there was a blood-red desert, where a young man could be seen sitting. He suddenly raised his head and looked up into the sky.

In a variety of locations, clan members began to take notice of the tolling of the bell. When it tolled a second time, even more people were visibly moved. When it tolled a third time, even more people were shocked.

However, after the third tolling of the bell... it didn't stop!

Meng Hao stood there in the Fang Clan's gate, unmoving, surrounded by a gentle aura that swirled around his body, stimulating his bloodline. His face was calm; since he had chosen this route, then he would continue to shock Heaven and Earth.

He took a deep breath and fully released the power of his bloodline, allowing the gentle power of the gate to thoroughly assess its strength.

In the blink of an eye, the Gatebeam exploded up. It broke through from 9,000 meters to 12,000, causing the bell to toll a fourth time!

That fourth bell toll could be heard by all the Fang Clan members over the entirety of Planet East Victory, and caused even more people to feel astonishment. Next, however, the Fang Gate's Gatebeam shot higher, reaching 15,000 meters. A fifth bell toll echoed out, shaking the entire Fang Clan.

"Five bell tolls! Who is testing out their bloodline? It's... so strong!"

"In the younger generation of the Fang Clan, there are less than fifty people who can achieve a 15,000-meter Gatebeam! When it comes to a 18,000-meter beam, there are less than ten, and as for a 21,000-meter beam... there are only three! And then there's... Prince Wei, with his 24,000-meter beam!!"

The Fang Clan was in an uproar. Meng Hao stood bathed in light in the Fang Clan's gate, the Gatebeam so bright that no one could see him inside

of it. Meng Hao took another breath, and his eyes glittered as the Gatebeam... shot up once again!!

It went from 15,000 meters up to 18,000 meters, the scintillating light seemingly limitless. All of the people outside of East Heaven Gate were struck speechless.

When the sixth bell tolled, the entire Fang Clan was sent into a stir.

Multiple figures shot up from various locations in the clan and headed toward East Heaven Gate. Even the Elders in the main hall of the Ancestral Mansion flew outside and then began to teleport toward the gate.

Tens of thousands of people all flew out at the same time, including countless powerful experts. In the blink of an eye, numerous people emerged from East Heaven Gate and looked over toward the Fang Clan's gate.

The other cultivators outside of East Heaven Gate began to edge backward, their bodies trembling, their expressions that of excitement. They looked at the people walking out of East Heaven Gate and realized that all of them were cultivators from the Fang Clan, powerful experts.

These people peered at the Fang Clan's gate, but were unable to clearly see who was inside.

"I wonder which branch's child has achieved such a level!!"

"Hahaha! The Immortals are blessing the Fang Clan. Another Chosen has appeared!"

"Who is it? Is it Tao'er? Or Young Hai? Perhaps Hong'er?"

The Fang Clan members who had just arrived were all waiting in anticipation. It was at this point that a group of eight figures appeared, led by the white-haired old man who had been sitting in the lead position in the main hall of the ancestral mansion.

As soon as he appeared, the other Fang Clan members looked over in shock, and then clasped hands.

“Greetings, Grand Elder!”

This old man was none other than the person who had been left to preside over the Fang Clan’s affairs after the Patriarchs had gone into secluded meditation. He was... the Grand Elder, Fang Tongtian! 1

Just as his name suggested, Fang Tongtian had an exceedingly high cultivation base that was virtually beyond comprehension. As he walked out of East Heaven Gate, he looked over at the Fang Clan’s gate, but even he could not see who was inside. All he could see was a vague shadow.

Fang Tongtian laughed loudly and said, “An 18,000-meter Gatebeam is an incredibly important matter for the Fang Clan. Very well, very well... a clan member with a bloodline like this means that the Fang Clan will definitely have a new Chosen!”

At the same time, more and more Fang Clan members were emerging from East Heaven Gate.

Meanwhile, the Outer Clan cultivators who had been guarding the gate were so scared that their limbs had become like jelly. They seemed on the verge of dropping dead from fright. As for the cultivator with the black birthmark, he was laying on the ground shivering uncontrollably.

Feng Xun was also shaking. He looked around at the powerful figures around him, and then back at the Fang Clan’s gate, his face covered with a look of disbelief.

It was at this point that more rumbling sounds could be heard as the light exploded up once again. It went from 18,000 meters to 21,000 meters, completely shocking the Fang Clan and everyone else outside the gate.

Grand Elder Fang Tongtian’s eyes were shining with unprecedented brightness.

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1. Fang Tongtian’s name in Chinese is 方通天 fāng tōng tiān. Tongtian

means ‘all-powerful’ or ‘exceedingly high’

# Chapter 895: He's... Back!

"21,000 meters!! In the current generation of the Fang Clan, there aren't even ten people who can cause a 21,000-meter Gatebeam to appear! Today... there's one more! Who is this person?"

"It's definitely someone from an auxiliary bloodline. I'm eighty percent certain that it's Tao'er."

The Fang Clan members outside East Heaven Gate were completely astonished. Meanwhile, back on Planet East Victory, seven bell tolls had rung out into the ears of all Fang Clan members. It was at this point that Meng Hao's 19th Uncle, who sat by the lake drinking alcohol, suddenly quivered. He slowly put the flagon of alcohol down and looked up into the sky.

"Seven bell tolls..." he thought. "Who exactly is stepping into the Fang Clan's gate for the first time. Could it be... that it's Hao'er?!?!" 19th Uncle suddenly stood up and waved his hand. The young man who had been hanging there upside down let out a shriek as 19th Uncle grabbed him and flew up into the air.

"Dad! Dad, it was my fault! I really made a mistake...." 19th Uncle completely ignored the young man's shrieks, simply carrying him along as he shot toward East Heaven Gate. He had to see if this newcomer... really was Meng Hao!

Meanwhile, in the Fang Clan ancestral mansion, there was another temple hall in which two people sat. One was an old man, the other slightly younger. They sat there cross-legged, listening to the tolling of the bell.

The old man's eyes opened, and he coolly said, "Go see which bloodline this person comes from. If it's ours, then it doesn't matter. If not... ask that person to come here; I can always adopt another grandchild."

The middle-aged man's expression was dignified, and he actually somewhat resembled Fang Xiufeng. He nodded, then strode away and vanished. When he reappeared, he was up in the sky.

His eyes glittered brightly.

"Latent talent with a 21,000-meter Gatebeam. That's only a little bit less than my boy, and makes this person worthy of becoming his little brother."

At the same time, deep down in the earth beneath the Fang Clan ancestral mansion, there was an Immortal's cave. It was filled with dense Immortal qi, the reason being that the entire Immortal's cave... was made of Immortal jade!

A young, bare-chested man sat cross-legged in that Immortal's cave, surrounded by nine wizened old men. The old men were bound with iron chains that were in turn connected to spell formations. The men howled shrilly as Immortal qi flowed out from them into the spell formations, and was then absorbed by the young man.

There were an additional three old men who stood in the cave, observing the process with slight smiles.

"Prince, your cultivation base is continuing to progress."

"Considering your latent talent, Prince, you can definitely be reckoned one of the very best in all the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Soon, even the Chosen from the Three Great Daoist Societies will have no choice but to bow their heads in your presence."

"Prince, you have incredible ambitions. It won't be long before you reach true Immortal Ascension. Then, you will be able to sweep across all the Chosen in the Ninth Mountain and Sea."

It was at this point that the tolling of the bells reached their ears, and the faces of the three men flickered. The young man, however, continued to meditate.

None of the non-Fang Clan members on Planet East Victory could hear the bells. However, more and more Fang Clan members were flying out and heading toward East Heaven Gate, gathering there to look at the boundless Gatebeam.

"Just who exactly is it...?"

"There's no need to get excited. We'll be able to see who it is soon enough. Pretty soon, this person's rank in the clan is going to be very different from everyone else!"

Within the crowd, Meng Hao's 19th Uncle peered toward the shadow in the Fang Clan's gate, trembling. Nobody else had ever seen Meng Hao before, and thus, wouldn't recognize him. However, 19th Uncle could sense something familiar about the shadow.

"Who is it?" asked the young man next to 19th Uncle, staring with wide eyes. "Who has a 21,000-meter Gatebeam?" In response, his father smacked him hard.

"Dad...." grumbled the young man, scowling. He was just about to say something else when, all of a sudden, more rumbling could be heard, and the beam of light coming from the Fang Clan's gate... shot higher once again.

RUMMMBLLE!

It went from 21,000 meters all the way to 24,000 meters. The grand sight caused all the Fang Clan Members outside East Heaven Gate to stare blankly.

"Heavens! What's... what's going on!?!?"

"24,000 meters. I can't believe... that it actually reached 24,000 meters! Prince Wei's Gatebeam is also 24,000 meters! This person's bloodline is actually as strong as Prince Wei's!"

"Who is there in the clan that could pull this off? It's impossible! If I remember correctly, there is no clan member at all who has a bloodline like this!!"

Amidst all the uproar, there were a few old men in the crowd from the Fang Clan whose expressions were grim and bitter, and who said nothing. There weren't many people like that in the crowd, but they were all direct bloodline descendants of the Fang Clan!

Their glory was now a thing of the past. First Meng Hao's grandfather had gone missing, then his father went to Planet South Heaven. After that,

the direct bloodline Patriarchs all went into secluded meditation and wouldn't emerge. The direct bloodline was in decline, and the situation was only continuing to grow worse.

When they saw the boundless light in front of them, they could only sigh.

"Our bloodline used to have someone who could considered a true Chosen!! It's too bad... he was supposed to return last year, but... now we don't even know if he's alive or dead."

There was another person in the crowd, a person who had just arrived. He was the middle-aged man who intended to try to acquire Meng Hao for his own bloodline. Originally, he stood there in the middle of all the other clan members, smiling broadly.

However, now that the Gatebeam had reached 24,000 meters, his eyes widened, and deep therein could be seen a flicker of killing intent. It didn't matter who this person in the gate was, the fact that they had caused a 24,000-meter Gatebeam to appear meant that they were a threat to his son.

Grand Elder Fang Tongtian's pupils constricted imperceptibly. However, his expression was one of kindness, and even more so, excitement.

"Wonderful! It appears that the Fang Clan will soon have another almighty Chosen like Fang Wei!"

The Fang Clan was in an uproar. On Planet East Victory, the bell had tolled eight times, and the clan members who had not already flown up into the air were astonished. Whether it was the young man in the blood-colored desert, or the middle-aged man practicing cultivation in the volcano, or anyone else, they all flew up.

Back in the ancestral mansion, the old man who had sent his son to East Heaven Gate suddenly opened his eyes, and they shone with terrifying light.

"24,000 meters. Other than my grandson, there is no one in the current generation of the Fang Clan who has such a strong bloodline. This person

must not be from Planet East Victory!

"It's him... it must be that damned son of a bitch!! He's not dead after all!" At first, killing intent flickered in his eyes, but then he frowned, and felt fear welling up in his heart. This was Planet East Victory, and because of the Fang Clan Dao Reserves... it didn't matter how high up he was in the clan, he didn't dare to publicly break clan rules.

"Dammit, he's making such a big scene! You can tell he's a profound schemer!"

By now, everyone in the Fang Clan was shaken. Meng Hao's Gatebeam put him on par with the number one Chosen in the clan, Fang Wei. The strength of such a bloodline was completely terrifying.

The ordinary clan members were all excited, but those clan members with deep cultivation bases or otherwise held significant influence watched with various expressions. They were happy to see a Chosen appear. However, if that Chosen's power reached a terrifying level... then it wouldn't actually be a joyous occasion.

If this person threatened Fang Wei's status, a fight would surely break out like that between a dragon and a tiger, the result would be a clan member dying, and would affect the struggle for supremacy by the various sub-branches in the family. In-clan fighting was a very complicated thing.

Meng Hao stood there in the Fang Clan's gate, his eyes closed but his blood surging. As it flowed through his body, he could sense that... there was still more power locked in his blood.

He took a deep breath and then suddenly opened his eyes.

"If I'm going to make a big scene, then I might as well go all out!" His cultivation base exploded with power, his blood flowed, and the entire gate began to shake. The Gatebeam outside once again shot up higher into the sky.

25,000 meters. 26,000 meters... 27,000 meters!

A buzz of conversation rose up, but was quickly silenced as... the beam continued to climb higher!

28,000 meters. 28,500 meters... 29,000... All the way to...

29,900 meters!

30,000 meters!! 1

All of the Fang Clan members were completely shaken to the maximum. Although Grand Elder Fang Tongtian's pupils dilated with shock, his face was plastered with a huge smile. The older members of the clan were frowning, but the ordinary clan members were shouting out in happiness.

"30,000 meters!! That's even more than Prince Wei! This person's bloodline purity is unprecedented!!"

"A 30,000-meter Gatebeam! In the tens of thousands of years of recorded clan history, there has never been something like this before!!"

"According to the legends, only the early ancestors of the clan had a 30,000-meter Gatebeam. That means this person's bloodline... evoked an Ancestral Awakening!!"

Meng Hao's 19th Uncle was incredibly excited, and his eyes shone brightly.

"It's definitely Hao'er. Only a grandson of the direct bloodline could have blood like that!!"

On Planet East Victory, the ninth bell tolled, and then a tenth. As they echoed out, the old man in the ancestral mansion suddenly shot to his feet, an expression of disbelief on his face. Deep beneath the surface of the ground, the young man in the Immortal's cave who was absorbing the Immortal qi from the nine old men suddenly opened his eyes. His pupils were violet, and shone with a strange glow.

"So, has he returned...?" the young man murmured.

On this day, the Fang Clan members were sent into unprecedented astonishment.

On this day, the crowds were packed tight outside East Heaven Gate.

On this day, all of the powerful experts of the Fang Clan flew out to East Heaven Gate.

On this day, the cultivators who had lined up outside East Heaven Gate experienced something they would never forget.

On this day, Feng Xun saw something that he would remember for his whole life, something like a dream. A cultivator he knew as Meng Hao... stepped into the Fang Clan's gate, and a 30,000-meter Bloodline Gatebeam shot up. It was the stuff of legends, and perhaps, the foundation of a myth.

Rumbling echoed out from the Fang Clan's gate as the brilliant light slowly faded away. The eyes of all onlookers, of all the Fang Clan members, were cast toward the gate. Gradually, what became clear was an unfamiliar young man who walked out to stand in front of everyone.

He was tall and slender, and wore a long blue robe. His black hair drifted about in the air around him, and his face was somewhat sallow and thin. However, as he stood there, he looked like he was standing on top of the sun.

His eyes shone brightly, like stars, and as he stood there, he looked around at everyone a bit bashfully.

"My father is Fang Xiufeng. My mother is Meng Li. My big sister is Fang Yu. I took my mother's surname, and my name is Meng Hao. Grandfathers and Grandmothers, Uncles, Brothers and Sisters... greetings!"

Meng Hao clasped hands and bowed deeply.

\*

1. In the original Chinese, 30,000 meters is written as 10,000 'zhang.' When the two characters '10,000' and 'zhang' are combined into a word, it also means "extremely high/deep" or "lofty".

# Chapter 896: The Fang Clan of Planet East Victory!

Meng Hao looked at all the members of the Fang Clan and introduced himself in an unprecedented fashion. The response to his words was complete and utter silence.

All the clan members looked at Meng Hao, at his unfamiliar face, and the Fang Clan gate behind him. The 30,000-meter beam of light from moments ago had faded away.

Meng Hao was a name they weren't familiar with, but when it came to Fang Xiufeng, that was a name that had once been the most glorious name in all the Fang Clan, and a name that would never be forgotten. Fang Xiufeng was the eldest son of the direct bloodline, and the number one Chosen of his generation. He had swept easily across all the other clan members of the other bloodlines, and had also suppressed the Chosen of various other sects in the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

During that time, Fang Xiufeng was so mighty that he was like a blazing sun in the sky and all others in his generation were like ordinary stars that served only to illuminate him in his splendor.

Furthermore, he ended up marrying an exceptional daughter of the Meng Clan. People came from the Eighth Mountain to attend their cultivator bonding ceremony, turning it into a grand occasion that people from both of those great Mountains and Seas still discussed.

Then Meng Hao was born, which pushed Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li to the peak of fame.

But then, in much the same way that luxury often fades to poverty, everything had changed in the blink of an eye. To the surprise and disbelief of many, Fang Xiufeng's father disappeared, and then Fang Xiufeng... went to Planet South Heaven to guard it for 100,000 years....

And all of this was for his son, Fang Hao!

He was a boy with a strong bloodline, who had experienced Nirvanic

Rebirth at the age of seven. He had a Heaven-defying bloodline, but had been born crippled. During those years, there were many people who believed that Fang Hao was holding his mother and father back.

But now, Meng Hao had returned!

Or perhaps you could say, Fang Hao had returned!

The return of this one individual had prompted the entire clan to emerge to receive him. When he left with his parents, it shook all of Planet East Victory. Then he returned, and similarly shook the entire planet once again.

That was because his return was marked with a 30,000-meter Bloodline Gatebeam, which immediately vanquished the number one Chosen of the Fang Clan, Fang Wei. His actions swept across all clan members, and made him the focus of all eyes.

After a moment of silence, the clan members erupted into conversation.

“Meng Hao.... He’s Fang Hao! The eldest grandson of the direct bloodline!”

“Heavens! It’s actually him! He’s returned! He’s the kid from years ago who had the strong bloodline and underwent Nirvanic Rebirth at the age of seven! He’s... back!”

When Meng Hao spoke the names of his parents, the direct bloodline clan members in the crowd began to tremble with excitement. 19th Uncle strode forward, staring at Meng Hao. During the past year, he had been wallowing in guilt and self-blame for letting his older cousin down, to the point where he had almost drowned in the negativity. Now that he saw Meng Hao safely returned, and also surging with incredible power, the joy he felt was virtually impossible to even describe.

Laughter rang out as Grand Elder Fang Tongtian walked forward. He looked at Meng Hao and then smiled kindly.

“As long as you’re back, that’s what’s important. It doesn’t matter if your name is Meng Hao or Fang Hao, you are still a member of the Fang Clan, and the eldest grandson of the clan’s direct bloodline!

"I held you in my arms when you were a little kid, you know." Fang Tongtian laughed heartily, and the kindness on his face was readily apparent. The more he looked at Meng Hao, the happier he seemed.

Behind him were other elder members of the clan, all of whom wore happy smiles on their faces as they approached Meng Hao.

"What a good kid! You must have suffered many hardships through the years."

"As long as you're back, that's what's important. Now that you've returned to the clan, your future prospects are limitless."

"Today is a day for great rejoicing! Wonderful! Simply wonderful!"

All the members of the Fang Clan were crying out in joy. In the cultivation world, when it comes to clans and sects, bloodlines and family, while they may be complicated, they are sometimes very simple.

Meng Hao's return was the subject of great happiness for countless individuals. The previously taciturn middle-aged man was laughing out loud. He stepped forward, looked Meng Hao over, and then sighed deeply.

"Hao'er, I'm your 2nd Uncle. Years ago, your father and I fought in battles together, grew up together, and practiced cultivation together. In fact, you and Wei'er were born only an hour apart. You were virtually born together.

"The most important thing is that you're back. You're a member of the Fang Clan, and within our clan, you are definitely Chosen!"

More people crowded around Meng Hao, especially the direct bloodline clan members. They were more excited than anyone else. Meng Hao's return was a source of incredible inspiration and encouragement. Furthermore, the appearance of the 30,000-meter Bloodline Gatebeam finally gave them hope for their own bloodline.

"Hao'er," said the Grand Elder, "come. Come here to me, and we can return home together." The praise and geniality in his eyes were clear.

19th uncle approached and began to introduce everyone to Meng Hao.

"Hao'er, this is the Grand Elder. The Patriarchs are all in secluded meditation. Fortunately, the Grand Elder is here to handle clan affairs."

Meng Hao quickly clasped hands and bowed.

"Junior offers greetings, Grand Elder."

The Grand Elder laughed; he seemed to be growing fonder of Meng Hao by the minute.

"However, I can't return to the clan at the moment," said Meng Hao, sounding a bit embarrassed. In response to his words, everyone stared in shock.

"A few moments ago, somebody stole some of my spirit stones," Meng Hao continued, sighing. His gaze swept across the group of Outer Sect cultivators who had been guarding East Heaven Gate, lingering for a moment on the cultivator with the black birthmark. In response, a tremor ran through the man, and then he passed out from fear.

"How much was stolen?" asked the young man standing next to 19th Uncle, looking excitedly at Meng Hao.

"A million," Meng Hao replied indignantly.

"Alright, well I'll take care of it." The young man licked his lips. "Oh, my name is Fang Xi." This young man was also a direct bloodline descendant, and was Meng Hao's younger cousin. 1

The rest of the Fang Clan members started to laugh out loud. The scene that was playing out in front of them was almost like a comedy. Clearly, someone had offended Meng Hao earlier, before they had known who he was. The Fang Clan members viewed the honor of the clan as an important thing, and wouldn't tolerate that honor being trampled, not even by Outer Clan cultivators who weren't aware of Meng Hao's identity. Those cultivators had unwittingly committed a grave mistake, and would have to be punished.

Immediately, clan members sprang into action, lining up the ashen-faced guard cultivators and taking them away.

As the cultivator with the black birthmark was taken away, he howled miserably. In his regret, tears streamed down his face.

The Grand Elder shook his head and laughed, then clasped Meng Hao's hand and led him into the Fang Clan's gate. The other Fang Clan members followed behind. Light from the gate shot high into the air, and rumbling sounds echoed out in all directions.

Feng Xun stared in shock. As Meng Hao walked off, he turned back and nodded benevolently. Although Meng Hao said nothing, Feng Xun was very moved.

Gradually, all of the Fang Clan members returned to Planet East Victory. A new set of cultivators was brought to stand guard outside the gate. These new cultivators trembled nervously; they knew what fate was in store for the previous guards, and held deep respect and fear for Meng Hao.

Now, they treated the crowds lined up outside the gate with incredible courtesy as they let them through.

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Back in the Fang Clan, clan members from various bloodlines returned from afar and gathered together in the ancestral mansion for a grand welcoming ceremony.

Compared to the gathering that had been prepared one year before, it was exponentially grander. After all, the previous gathering had been more for show. This time... many people came back of their own volition. They wanted to see for themselves exactly what Meng Hao looked like, this clan member who had a 30,000-meter Bloodline Gatebeam.

Roughly half of Planet East Victory was under the Fang Clan's jurisdiction and was occupied by various auxiliary bloodlines. On this planet, there was no Imperial dynasty, only the Fang Clan.

Regardless of whether it was their mortal cities, or their cultivators, the Fang Clan... was so large and powerful that they eclipsed everyone else. Furthermore, the Church of the Blood Orchid and the Church of the

Puppet God both had deep connections to the Fang Clan.

Of course, the Medicine Immortal Sect was independent, since it had been founded by a Patriarch of the Fang Clan who was still alive, creating a unique relationship.

The Fang Clan ancestral mansion was essentially a huge city, and served as the capital city of the Fang Clan. It was situated next to an ocean, and was the location where the innumerable bloodlines of the Fang Clan would come to gather. It was filled with extravagantly decorated palatial buildings and numerous pagodas that stretched out as far as the eye could see.

In the past, only the direct bloodline had occupied the ancestral mansion, but in recent years... as the direct bloodline declined, some areas had been occupied by an auxiliary bloodline. Now, the direct bloodline only controlled about half of the entire ancestral mansion. In fact, signs pointed to that auxiliary bloodline eventually coming to be considered the main branch.

The welcoming ceremony for Meng Hao's return was an affair attended by tens of thousands of clan members, who were now gathered in the central square in the middle of the ancestral mansion. To Meng Hao, it looked vaguely similar to what he had seen in the illusory Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple.

The ground was paved with green stone slabs, and numerous spell formations could be seen, which emanated incredible pressure. To Meng Hao, it almost felt as if an enormous ocean were covering everything and weighing it down.

The buildings he saw in all directions were luxurious, and it was as if an enormous sect that could shake all of the Ninth Mountain and Sea had suddenly revealed a tiny portion of itself to Meng Hao.

Yet, all of it was really just the tip of the iceberg. There were further layers of power that Meng Hao couldn't even sense with his cultivation base. All he knew was that it was impossible for him to even imagine how many Fang Clan members there were on Planet East Victory, and that

wasn't even mentioning the Outer Clans or other cultivators who had been specially bestowed with the surname Fang.

Altogether... it was a staggering number of cultivators.

Furthermore, the people who had appeared earlier outside of East Heaven Gate were only the most illustrious members of their various bloodlines.

The Grand Elder presided over the welcoming ceremony, and introduced Meng Hao to many clan members. After sacrifices were made to the ancestors, he gave Meng Hao a command medallion and numerous other trifles. After that, he led Meng Hao to the Fang Temple in the ancestral mansion.

The temple was enormous, and from the outside, resembled some enormous beast sitting there cross-legged. Inside was a coliseum-like structure, with ten thousand seats arranged in concentric rings. At the moment, more than half of those seats were occupied by various elder members of the clan. All of them looked on with sparkling eyes, and had cultivation bases so profound that Meng Hao couldn't assess them.

Grand Elder Fang Tongtian sat up in the front, his gaze as bright as fire as he looked at Meng Hao standing in the middle of the temple. There were many other clan members seated nearby, including his 2nd Uncle, as well as an old man covered with wrinkles, who gazed piercingly at Meng Hao as he measured him up. That old man... was Fang Wei's paternal grandfather, the same old man within whom killing intent toward Meng Hao had flickered earlier.

There were other clan members seated in the area. Most of them were young, and among their number, Meng Hao caught sight of Fang Donghan, who looked at him and smiled. 2

Meng Hao also saw Fang Xiangshan. When she saw him looking at her, she trembled and lowered her head. She obviously still remembered everything that had happened on Planet South Heaven 3

Many Chosen from the Fang Clan were there, including a young man in a white robe, with skin as smooth as jade. He was the young man who had

been practicing cultivation earlier in the Immortal's cave deep under the ancestral mansion. Currently, he sat in a seat, surrounded by a group of over a hundred cultivators roughly his age.

One of the young cultivators near him was Fang Yunyi! 4

Fang Yunyi gave Meng Hao a venomous stare, then leaned over and whispered something into the ear of the young man in the white robe.

Actually, that young man had no need for the entourage. Comparing their energy to his was like comparing the darkness of night to a raging fire. He seemed like a wolf in the middle of a flock of sheep, and was someone anyone would recognize at a single glance.

This was the previous number one Chosen in the Fang Clan, Prince Wei... Fang Wei!



Official ISSTH art of Fang Wei. The gate in the background reads “East Heaven Gate”

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Fang Xi – This “Xi” is a bit hard to pronounce. The easiest way to say it is like the word “she” in English. However, the beginning sound in the word actually doesn’t exist in English and is more like something half-way

between SH and S

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1. Fang Xi's name in Chinese is 方西 fāng xī. Xi means 'west'.
2. Back on Planet South Heaven, Fang Donghan was the first person to guess that Meng Hao was Fang Hao, which was in chapter 822. He helped him escape the ambush in chapter 824, and also made an interesting comment about Fang Hao in chapter 826.
3. Fang Xiangshan was the girl he was chasing when his parents and the people from the other clans showed up. Those events began in chapter 831 and went on for a few chapters after that.
4. Fang Yunyi was beaten up by Meng Hao for not addressing him properly in chapter 832.

# Chapter 897: Fang Wei!

Fang Wei was always surrounded by groups of fellow young cultivators. No matter where he went, he was the center of attention. After all, he was Fang Wei, the long time number one Chosen of this generation in the Fang Clan.

He was famous in all the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

Furthermore, although he wasn't the legitimate eldest grandson of the Fang Clan, he essentially held that position.

In this generation of the Fang Clan, the only person who ranked above him in seniority was Meng Hao!

As he sat there calmly, he glanced at Meng Hao for a moment, then closed his eyes. A year before, when the clan had convened the welcoming ceremony, he did not make an appearance; he couldn't care less that Meng Hao had been scheduled to return.

The only reason he came today was because the strength of Meng Hao's bloodline had piqued his interest.

The air in the temple was very solemn. All of the people seated inside were Fang Clan Elders, and although not every single clan Elder had come, this group comprised the majority of those who were on Planet East Victory.

Each person in the temple looked like an Immortal Deity. All of them, be it in terms of their qi and blood, or in terms of their aura, were terrifying to the extreme. As Meng Hao looked around, he realized that he couldn't gauge any of their cultivation bases.

As of this moment, Meng Hao gained a clearer understanding of how powerful the Fang Clan was.

If you didn't count the Ji Clan, this clan could actually be considered the number one clan in all the Ninth Mountain and Sea. The year that Lord Li disappeared, if the Fang Clan had been stronger by just a hair... the Ninth Mountain and Sea might now be following a Lord Fang.

Meng Hao was also well aware that he was really only looking at the tip of the iceberg. The Fang Clan had even deeper and more powerful resources, making them a force that few would ever trifle with lightly.

Furthermore, Meng Hao... was the eldest grandson of the direct bloodline of the Fang Clan. It was easy to imagine what would have happened if he hadn't experienced the Seventh Year Tribulation. Had he grown up in the Fang Clan, his status and fame would definitely have made him well-known throughout the Ninth Mountain and Sea, as well as the Eighth Mountain and Sea.

All of the Elders were now looking at Meng Hao. It was impossible to tell whether they were happy or angry; their expressions were abstruse and impossible to read, and filled the hall with incredible pressure. As for Fang Wei, and his father and grandfather, undetectable gleams flickered in their eyes.

Meng Hao was the only person standing, right there in the middle of the temple. As for the pressure that emanated from those surrounding him, Meng Hao didn't even flinch.

After a long moment, Grand Elder Fang Tongtian finally spoke.

"Fang Hao!" he said, his expression solemn. His voice echoed out in the temple, making it sound almost as if a throng of people were speaking. Everything trembled.

"Having offered sacrifices to the ancestors, you are now officially a member of the Fang Clan. Henceforth, you shall enjoy access to the Fang Clan's cultivation resources, and many things will now tilt in your favor.

"However, there is something you must never forget!" The Grand Elder's expression was suddenly threatening, although it lacked any anger.

"Now that you are a member of the Fang Clan, you must follow all of the clan rules. Violate those rules, and it doesn't matter how strong your bloodline is, or that you have a 30,000-meter Bloodline Gatebeam. Despite that... you will still be punished!"

"Speaking of the clan rules, I will give you a detailed copy that you can

study in a moment.”

Meng Hao stood there silently, looking at the Grand Elder.

After the Grand Elder finished speaking, a white-haired, ruddy-faced old man seated off to the side smiled and said, “Ladies and Gentlemen of the clan, let us discuss how the cultivation resources will be allocated to Fang Hao.”

“Hao’er is the eldest grandson of the direct bloodline,” someone said. “In fact, he is the highest-ranking grandson of his generation in the entire Fang Clan. He’s had a hard time in the outside world during these years. Now that he’s back in the clan, he should naturally be given the very best of everything!”

“The Immortal’s cave next to Brightmoon Lake has good fortune of Heaven and Earth inside,” another person said. “Furthermore, the remains of a Heavenly Dragon can be found therein. It is absolutely the best Immortal’s cave in all of Planet East Victory. From my perspective, that Immortal’s cave should definitely be given to Hao’er.”

Another of the Elders looked at Meng Hao with praise in his eyes and said, “That’s right. For years, no one has possessed the qualifications to have that Immortal’s cave. We of the direct bloodline have him as our eldest grandson, and in fact, the highest-ranking grandson of his entire generation! He is the only one who could possibly be qualified to have that Immortal’s cave.”

This was not a situation where people were trying to bring Meng Hao down by over-praising him. These people truly wanted Meng Hao to have the best resources to help him advance himself in the quickest manner possible.

Almost as soon as the Elder from the direct bloodline finished speaking, other Elders began to speak.

“That’s not entirely proper. Hao’er has just returned, and hasn’t yet made the least contribution whatsoever to the good of the clan. You can’t reward him with that Immortal’s cave on the basis of his position alone. That wouldn’t be fair.”

"Precisely. In the Fang Clan, one's standing is based on how much one has contributed to the clan. To avoid causing other clan members to have feelings of resentment, Hao'er should not be given that Immortal's cave."

It only took a moment for a clamor to arise as numerous Elders began to give their opinions. In the end, Meng Hao could tell that about thirty percent of the Elders disagreed, with only about ten percent standing on Meng Hao's side. The rest maintained their silence.

The Grand Elder had predicted that something like this would happen, so he sat there silently, his expression the same as usual.

It was at this point that suddenly, Fang Wei, who sat in a chair surrounded by over a hundred young companions, suddenly opened his eyes to speak.

"Respected Elders, I regret to inform you that Junior has already taken the Immortal's cave by Brightmoon Lake and gifted it to someone." His voice was placid and seemingly devoid of any emotion whatsoever. As soon as he spoke, the direct bloodline Elders' faces grew dark. However, none of them offered any sort of response.

An imperceptible flicker appeared in Meng Hao's eyes. The words spoken by Fang Wei carried much meaning. This was a meeting of Fang Clan elders, and none of the other members of the younger generation had seats except for Fang Wei.

Furthermore, his words actually carried a domineering weight that seemed to be intolerant of any opposition. It was so domineering... that even the direct bloodline Elders didn't dare to retort.

Meng Hao looked over at Fang Wei, and Fang Wei looked back at him for a moment before closing his eyes.

Then, the direct bloodline Elder spoke up again.

"Other than the Immortal's cave, there are also the ten batches of Rainbow Immortal Evanescence Pills concocted by Pill Elder from the Dao of Alchemy Division. That type of pill is a rare medicine that provides mysterious assistance when rising from the Spirit Realm into the

Immortal Realm. Seven batches of those pills should be given to Hao'er!"

"That's not appropriate either," said another Elder. "Only ten batches of pills are concocted per year, and the medicinal plant ingredients are all extinct in the outside world. The Rainbow Immortal Evanescence Pill is the Fang Clan's strongest type of pill that exists in the gap between the Spirit and Immortal Realms. They are concocted for the benefit of the entire junior generation. Therefore, giving seven batches to Hao'er is impossible. I say, one batch should be enough."

As before, the Grand Elder said nothing. It was at this point that the white-robed Fang Wei opened his eyes and spoke again.

"Respected Elders, I regret to inform you that Junior has already made arrangements for all ten batches of Rainbow Immortality Evanescence Pills."

Immediately, silence once again filled the entire temple. Fury burned in the direct bloodline Elders' eyes, but all they could do was clench their jaws and maintain silence.

Meng Hao had not spoken yet either, but his brow had gradually become furrowed as he looked over at Fang Wei. Fang Wei had only spoken twice, yet each time his words had silenced the Elders. This fact revealed a lot.

In addition, Meng Hao was gradually coming to detect something familiar about Fang Wei, although he couldn't quite put his finger on what it was. After a moment, he began to wonder if he was just imagining it.

Silence reigned in the temple, and while the direct bloodline clan members sat there gloomily, there were Elders from other bloodlines who were smiling slightly. Finally, Grand Elder Fang Tongtian cleared his throat and then began to speak, his eyes shining.

"Well, since we have a disagreement regarding the Immortal's cave and the medicinal pills, let's put those matters aside for now. Hao'er, you are the eldest grandson of the direct bloodline, so I will take responsibility for you now. There will be no more discussion. You will be given the highest quality compensation from the clan." With that, he waved his right hand, causing a jade slip to fly out and come to float in front of Meng Hao.

“Take this jade slip to the clan’s Hall of the People. That is where you can withdraw your monthly set cultivation resources.

“As for the Immortal’s cave....” The Grand Elder muttered to himself for a moment, then waved his hand, causing a gentle light to spread out, which rapidly solidified into a map.

There were various dots of glowing light on the map, each of which represented an Immortal’s cave. The closer the Immortal’s caves were to the center of the map, the stronger the auras they emitted. In the very center of them all was a lake, which was none other than Brightmoon Lake.

“Hao’er, go ahead and select an Immortal’s cave from among the ones you see here. The dim lights represent Immortal’s caves that have already been spoken for.” As the Grand Elder spoke, about eighty percent of the lights on the map went dark. Not many were left behind. There were still a few next to Brightmoon Lake, but most were located in other areas, and especially along the edges.

All eyes were on Meng Hao, and most of the onlookers seemed concerned, although it was impossible to tell whether such feelings were true or false.

Meng Hao was silent for a moment, then clasped hands and bowed to the Grand Elder.

“Grand Elder, Junior has come to Planet East Victory upon my father’s request to take my two Nirvana Fruits. I don’t really care about Immortal’s caves or medicinal pills. I don’t need them. I just want my Nirvana Fruits.” Having directly spoken these words, Meng Hao gazed at the Grand Elder.

Complete silence filled the temple.

Finally, the Grand Elder waved his hand as if he couldn’t accept Meng Hao’s refusal of the Immortal’s cave and other things.

“Hao’er, you just got back to the clan,” he said, his voice kind. “You need some time to get familiar with everything. An Immortal’s cave, cultivation resources, and those medicinal pills are things that, as a member of the

Fang Clan, belong to you by right.

"Regarding the Nirvana Fruits, fear not, they're yours. Naturally, they will be returned to you. I personally promised your father exactly that when he left."

"Don't worry about that matter. Although, it is a significant affair. Two days from now, I will make an announcement throughout the entire clan, inviting clan members here to bear witness to the returning of the Nirvana Fruits into your hands."

Meng Hao didn't respond. Originally, he didn't have any desire to come to the Fang Clan. Now that he was here, and he understood the situation, he was even less willing to stay.

In fact, he was even of a mind to simply leave right then and there. However, when he thought of his parents' hopes, he took a deep breath, and a fierce glow appeared in his eyes for a brief moment. He nodded, and then decided to say one more thing.

"Grand Elder, there is also an Immortality Illumination Vine that my father had prepared for me. Could you please return that to me as well?"

Before the Grand Elder could even respond, the white-robed Fang Wei's voice could be heard.

"I regret to inform you that I've already made arrangements for that Immortality Illumination Vine as well," he said coolly.

As soon as the words left his mouth, Meng Hao's eyes sparkled with icy coldness. He looked over at Fang Wei, smiled slightly, and then began to speak.

"Junior Cousin Fang Wei," he said, his voice ice cold despite his smile, "apparently, I beat the crap out of you too hard when we were young. That's the only explanation for why you've become such a nutcase. Otherwise, what would possibly make you think it was acceptable to steal from me?" 1

When Fang Wei heard this, his eyes glowed with icy coldness as he stared dead at Meng Hao.

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1. In chapter 800 it talked about Meng Hao bullying Fang Wei when they were both children.

# Chapter 898: Do You Want to Die?!

“Could it be that as long as something belongs to me, you’ll try to steal it?”

“Your twisted view of life is really my fault. In the future, I’ll do my best to help you correct the error of your ways.” Meng Hao said these things while staring directly at Fang Wei.

“Do you want to die?” replied Fang Wei coolly.

“How pretentious of you!” said Meng Hao, walking toward Fang Wei. Each step he took caused the ground to tremble, and his eyes were cold as he stared at Fang Wei.

“In terms of status,” he continued coldly, “I am the eldest grandson. In terms of bloodline, my Bloodline Gatebeam was 30,000 meters. In terms of clan seniority, I’m your Elder Cousin. It’s my duty to admonish you, and you have no grounds upon which you would be justified in resisting! Since you insist on spewing hogwash, I have to ask you, Fang Wei... do YOU want to die?” Meng Hao’s words were incredibly aggressive.

After he finished speaking, he turned to the Grand Elder and clasped his hands.

“Grand Elder, Fang Wei has shown disrespect to his elders, which undermines the norms of etiquette, a sin that neither Heaven nor Earth can forgive. For a clan to prosper, it must have a standard of conduct. Given the Fang Clan’s status as a great clan of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, the rules must be stricter than others. Respect for seniority is the standard which must be met for the future growth of the clan!”

“Do the clan rules permit someone to act in this way? If not, then he has violated clan rules. What might the punishment be for such actions?” As he spoke, the surrounding Elders’ eyes went wide, especially the direct bloodline Elders, who were greatly shocked.

When Meng Hao spoke, his words were as sharp as a sword, completely astonishing everyone in the audience. None of them could possibly have

imagined that he would speak in such a vicious tone.

Of course, they didn't know that Meng Hao had been raised as a scholar, and loved to spar with words. Back in his days as an alchemist, he had engaged in a debate that had resulted in his opponent's Dao Heart becoming unstable. From that, it could be seen how sharp his words could be.

Furthermore, he had verbally dueled with the meat jelly on many occasions, which could be considered further training in debate.

It was at this point that Fang Wei's father, who sat off to the side of the Elders, suddenly spoke, his voice cold.

"Fang Hao, clan rules prohibit internal conflicts. How could you speak such malicious words? You need to spend some time in self-examination! Men, take him away!"

Meng Hao showed no fear in response, but instead, began to laugh uproariously. Now that he was here in the Fang Clan, and could now take advantage of the Clan's regulations and ordinances, he would not allow anyone to dare try to openly put him at a disadvantage.

"2nd Uncle, correct? Were my words really malicious? I said that I beat him too severely when we were young. That is a simple fact. I said that he has become abnormal, an expression of regret. Then I said that I wish to help him correct the error of his ways. As his Elder Cousin, all of this is a condemnation of myself!"

"As his senior, it is my responsibility, in fact, my DUTY to help my Junior Cousin. Therefore, I am unsure as to why 2nd Uncle would call such words malicious."

Fang Wei's father frowned. "How nasty and derogatory! Your histrionics will do you no good! Facts are facts!"

"I'll tell you the facts," retorted Meng Hao. "This headstrong Junior Cousin wants to steal my Immortal's cave. He also wants to steal my medicinal pills. Despite that, I said nothing. He is the Junior and I am the Senior. If I ALLOW him to have those things, then very well, he can have

them.

"However, the reason that I chided him was because he also expressed his desire to steal the Immortality Illumination Vine left for me by my father. Since that item belongs to my father, how could a Junior member of the clan possibly steal it? Can a Junior member of the clan actually be permitted to steal things that belong to someone of the Senior generation? 2nd Uncle, is it possible that you actually approve of such a thing?"

"Isn't such behavior a violation of clan rules? It certainly does not respect the rules of seniority, does it? Aren't such actions tantamount to open rebellion?"

"In the Ninth Mountain and Sea, what clan exists that permits members of the Junior generation to steal things from the Senior generation? What clan exists that believes such a thing to be proper? Furthermore, what clan exists that intentionally misrepresents the facts, inverting right and wrong?"

"2nd Uncle, please, enlighten me. Junior's experience is limited, and I'm really unsure of the answers to these questions." Meng Hao flicked his sleeve and looked over at Fang Wei's father, his eyes glittering.

"You...." Fang Wei's father looked enraged, but he apparently couldn't think of anything to say in response.

The temple hall was completely silent. The Elders who had originally maintained a position of neutrality were now looking over curiously at Meng Hao.

19th Uncle's son, Fang Xi, was also there in the crowd, staring blankly at Meng Hao. He had never imagined that Meng Hao could speak so incisively.

Meng Hao had just taken a small matter and turned it into something important, had transformed a relatively minor event into a huge one. He had struck people speechless. Such skill in speaking was something that Fang Xi had never encountered before in his life, and it caused his eyes to shine brightly.

"Enough!" said Grand Elder Fang Tongtian. He frowned and swished his sleeve.

"We're all members of the same clan; there's no need for bickering. The matter has passed and will not be brought up again. Hao'er, the Immortality Illumination Vine left behind by your father will be given to you." With that, he made a grasping motion, causing a bag of holding to suddenly appear in his hand. He tossed it out toward Meng Hao, who grabbed it and scanned it with spiritual sense. Inside, he could see the Immortality Illumination Vine, roughly three inches long and as thick as a finger.

Killing intent flickered in Fang Wei's eyes. He gave a cold harrumph, then stood up and walked out of the temple, completely ignoring Meng Hao in the process. Rustling sounds could be heard as his more than one hundred followers left with him. Each and every one glared menacingly at Meng Hao as they left, especially Fang Yunyi, whose eyes were filled with intense venom.

Meng Hao ignored Fang Wei, as if he wasn't worth looking at. He clasped hands and bowed to the Grand Elder, then looked back at the map of Immortal's caves. As of now, he was determined to rise to prominence in the Fang Clan, all for the sake of his father and mother. As such, he would need to make some preparations.

"Dad and mom want me to fight hard and excel for their sakes, and they want me to make sure all the people in the Fang Clan see it.... As their son, that's exactly what I'm going to do!"

After looking over the Immortal's caves, he found one that didn't seem very extraordinary at all, although it did have a nicely-sized medicinal plant garden.

"Grand Elder, I'll take this Immortal's cave."

The Grand Elder nodded and performed an incantation gesture. Immediately, a command medallion appeared and flew out toward Meng Hao.

"Very well. This clan meeting will now adjourn." Next, he looked kindly

at Meng Hao and said, "Hao'er, in two days, come back here, and I will personally give you your Nirvana Fruits. There's no need to feel anxious about that." It seemed the Grand Elder approved of how Meng Hao had behaved during the meeting.

As the crowds dispersed, 19th Uncle called Meng Hao over and introduced him to the Elders of the direct bloodline. When they looked at him, emotional expressions of reminiscence could be seen on their faces.

Some of these men had watched Meng Hao's father grow up, and had even held Meng Hao when he was a baby. They began to talk, and when Meng Hao's father was mentioned, they sighed. Then the subject of his grandfather came up, and their expressions darkened.

It was evening before they finally dispersed. Fang Xi volunteered to escort Meng Hao through the ancestral mansion to his Immortal's cave.

En route, Fang Xi took him to get his cultivation resources, and the two of them began to chat amiably.

"Ai, Coz, it's a good thing you're finally back. If you hadn't returned, the direct bloodline would only continue to waste away....

"You have no idea how angry I've been recently. Every time I see Fang Wei, I have to hold back from giving him a taste of my fist! What's so special about that bastard, huh? His latent talent? His strong bloodline?

"Hmph. If it weren't for his father and grandfather, and their Patriarch who occasionally shows his face, their branch would never have started eyeing the ancestral mansion!"

Fang Xi continued to complain to Meng Hao the entire way.

"In terms of latent talent, Coz, yours is definitely the best. Your Bloodline Gatebeam was 30,000 meters high! Fang Wei can't even compare! Let's see how he continues to claim to be the number one Chosen in the future!

"And then there's that good-for-nothing Fang Yunyi. He's vicious! Coz, in the future, you really need to be careful about him.

“Come to think of it, Coz, your cultivation base needs some improvement. It’s too bad about those Rainbow Immortal Evanescence Pills. They’re powerful, very powerful. With pills like that, coupled with the power of an Immortality Illumination Vine, it’s easily possible to achieve true Immortal Ascension, and then have a big improvement in your cultivation base.

“It’s one of the Fang Clan’s miraculous pills. In fact, when you consider medicinal pills for the Spirit Realm, Rainbow Immortal Evanescence Pills are one of the top types of pills in all the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

“Damn that Fang Wei! If it wasn’t for him, all of those pills would have been yours.” Fang Xi jabbered on and on, almost like the meat jelly. Eventually, he started to tell Meng Hao stories from when he was young, starting from the time he was one year old and going all the way until he was hundreds of years old....

Meng Hao just smiled and listened to Fang Xi’s grumblings and other explanations about the Fang Clan. From all of this, he now had a much better understanding of the Fang Clan. Gradually, though, Fang Xi’s energetic blabbering turned into nothing more than a buzzing in Meng Hao’s ears.

Overall, though, Meng Hao could sense the sincerity in Fang Xi.

As they walked along, they ran into many Fang Clan members, all of whom looked curiously at Meng Hao. Some wore smiles, other scowls. Just about any expression imaginable could be seen.

“Coz, there’s another important thing. You were really badass back at the temple! I’ve never seen anybody from the Junior generation dare to stand in the middle of the temple and talk like that. Every single thing you said was true and sensible. They were all struck speechless!”

Night had fallen by the time Fang Xi led Meng Hao to his Immortal’s cave, which was located in the far northern section of the ancestral mansion. It was a quiet, idyllic location that almost looked like a painting. It was night, but the two moons in the sky lit up everything, making it a beautiful scene.

Meng Hao's Immortal's cave was actually a sprawling two-story residence, beautifully decorated and quite luxurious. There was a small lake nearby, and a stone path which led to it. The canopy of stars overhead was reflected by the lake water, making everything sparkle.

A garden surrounded the little lake, within which grew a variety of medicinal plants. There wasn't a huge amount, but they still caused a sweet fragrance to fill the air. Lotuses could be seen floating on the surface of the lake, and overall, the entire scene looked like something celestial.

Meng Hao looked around and was quite content. Although this place might not count as very special when compared to all of the other Immortal's caves in the Fang Clan's ancestral mansion, in the outside world, it would be considered one of the best.

There was abundant spiritual energy here, as well as Immortal qi. Meng Hao walked into the courtyard and then took a deep breath; he really liked this place.

"Coz," said Fang Xi, "about your gift of the tongue... do you think you could teach me about that? My dad says that I jabber all the time, but that nothing I say makes sense. He's even beaten me on more than one occasion because of it. Coz, could you help me out? Please?" Fang Xi's tone was one of piteous entreaty.

Meng Hao turned to look at Fang Xi and smiled.

"Are you sure?"

Fang Xi's expression brightened, and he nodded.

Meng Hao hesitated for a moment, but seeing Fang Xi's hopeful expression, he couldn't help but sigh. Tapping his bag of holding, he caused the meat jelly to appear in his hand.

The meat jelly immediately pouted and then began to jabber discontentedly.

"Meng Hao, you bastard, you deserve to die a horrible death! You dumped me and then exploited me! Wait. No. You exploited me then

dumped me! Y-y-you, you're immoral! You're shameless! You're a big bully! I'm going to convert you!"

"Fang Xi," said Meng Hao, clearing his throat, "keep coming to visit me. Every time you do, you can chat with this thingamajig. When you can hold a conversation with it for three days, you'll be a badass."

# Chapter 899: Difficult To Distinguish Between Enmity and Benevolence

“That thing?” said Fang Xi, staring with wide eyes at the meat jelly. The meat jelly suddenly stopped talking and looked at Fang Xi. Both of them seemed to be somewhat at a loss at first, but soon, bright glows appeared in both of their eyes.

“Killing intent!” gasped Meng Hao, backing up as he sensed the aura building between the meat jelly and Fang Xi.

“So, finally a worthy opponent!” said the meat jelly, leaping up into the air and landing next to Fang Xi, an expression of unprecedented solemnity on its face.

“It seems I’ve met my match!” replied Fang Xi, having sensed the energy within the meat jelly. It was an explosive energy that only he could sense, and from it, he knew that the meat jelly could continue a conversation for days on end.

“It seems I need to warm up a bit first,” said the meat jelly, clearing its throat. “Ahem. Look kid, Lord Third is going to tell you a story that took place three three three three... well anyway, countless three years ago. This was back in the early days of Heaven and Earth....”

“Cut the crap! All you know is three? Three three three three three. What a disgrace!” Fang Xi hadn’t even begun speaking when all of a sudden, the parrot flew out from Meng Hao’s bag of holding. It landed on a nearby tree branch and looked at Fang Xi with a look of disdain.

“Kid, don’t listen to his jabbering,” said the parrot. “You study with Lord Fifth. Look at my mouth, is it sharp or not? From that, you should be able to imagine how sharp-tongued I am!”

Meng Hao quickly left the courtyard and fled into the Immortal’s cave itself. In his opinion, the battlefield occupied by the meat jelly, the parrot and Fang Xi, was a place he shouldn’t remain in. He had already experienced some of Fang Xi’s gift of the tongue on the way here. He had

talked the entire way, telling stories from the day he was one year old all the way to the present, and tales from the founding of the Fang Clan all the way to modern times. When he had run out of conversation topics, he had then begun to introduce the different members of the Fang Clan to Meng Hao.

Of course, it wasn't an introduction made in person, just his own opinions....

Inside his residence, Meng Hao looked around and saw extreme luxury. Even the furniture was made of spirit stones, which caused his eyes to grow wide.

"The Fang Clan... is really rich! And I'm the eldest grandson! Yet... I'm so poor...." Sighing at the injustice of it all, he waved his hands, causing all of the spirit stone furniture to be sucked into his bag of holding.

The once luxurious residence was now simple and stark, and as he looked around, he felt much better. Finally, he sat down cross-legged on the ground, his eyes glittering.

"Father wanted me to get my Nirvana Fruits. It goes without saying that reason is because he wants me to rise to prominence in the Fang Clan....

"It won't be incredibly difficult to do that, but as for the Nirvana Fruits... the Fang Clan... will they actually be able to give them to me?" Frowning, Meng Hao considered the ambush he had experienced on the way here, and how they had tried to kill him, and his eyes glowed with coldness.

"I wonder if Fang Wei's branch of the clan sent the assassins...." Meng Hao had learned of how the clan's direct bloodline was currently in a very poor situation. On the other hand, Fang Wei's branch of the clan was on the rise. Not only did they have the support of many of the clan Elders, but they had even occupied some of the ancestral mansion. Some branches of the clan remained neutral, but for the most part, Fang Wei's branch had completely eclipsed the direct bloodline.

"The Grand Elder was acting strange," Meng Hao thought. "He seemed kind, but in my opinion, it was just an act." He smiled coldly. Other people all assumed that he had been taken care of by his father and mother from

the time he was young. They believed that, although his life had not been what it might have been had he stayed in the Fang Clan, surely he had not experienced the twists and turns of a dangerous life.

The truth of the matter was that from the age of seven onward, Meng Hao had been completely alone. In the mortal world, he had struggled hard during his youth, and had developed a spirit of independence. Then he had entered the cultivation world, and had experienced many things, and had survived numerous deadly crises. Step by step, he had advanced through life to reach his current situation. The help he had received from his parents had been scant, to say the least.

Although he might not be a perfect judge of character, he rarely made mistakes when sizing people up. He had quite a bit of experience in contending with others, and naturally, had become quite good at it.

"In two days, they will most likely not give me the Nirvana Fruits. They'll come up with some excuse that I won't be able to dispute, and then delay the matter....

"Of course, me returning to the clan has probably caused a huge headache for whoever it was that was trying to have me killed. However... the higher my position within the Fang Clan, the more afraid they will be to do anything to me."

After some more thought, his eyes flickered, and he opened the bag of holding that contained his cultivation resources from the Fang Clan. After looking it over, he couldn't help but take a deep breath.

There were a hundred bottles of medicinal pills, 1,000,000 spirit stones, and one hundred magic manuals. Although there were no Daoist magics, there were many powerful divine abilities. As for the Fang Clan's most powerful Daoist magics, of course there were none.

That was something else Meng Hao had learned from Fang Xi. Not even Fang Wei could have access to those core Daoist magics, not without performing deeds of merit. Such deeds were considered contributions to the Fang Clan.

The more deeds of merit one performed, the more rewards could be

acquired.

It was a rule that applied to all of the Fang Clan; not even the Grand Elder could violate it.

“I get one thousand merit points every month based on my status in the clan alone. Unfortunately, that’s simply not enough to enable me to get some of those core Daoist magics.” Meng Hao’s eyes gleamed as he pulled out a jade slip which listed the names and properties of countless medicinal pills, Daoist magics, and other magical items.

All of these things were items that could be purchased with merit points.

There were many that caused Meng Hao’s heart to thump after seeing them.

“There are many ways to earn merit points. The most common way is to complete some of the various trials by fire that are publicly announced throughout the clan. Different trials by fire can earn you different amounts of merit points.”

At the same time that Meng Hao was studying the jade slip, Fang Wei’s father and grandfather were seated cross-legged in a temple in the eastern section of the ancestral mansion.

Fang Wei’s father was named Fang Xiushan. Frowning, he looked at his own father and said, “Dad, I can’t believe that brat has returned....” 1

“It doesn’t matter,” the old man replied coolly. “I’ve already taken care of the matter.” A sinister gleam appeared in his eyes. “If he had returned and kept a low profile, it wouldn’t have mattered. But since he has decided to act so high and mighty, he’s already placed himself half a step into the Yellow Springs.

“Make sure Wei’er focuses on his cultivation. He’s a Chosen of the Fang Clan, and the Patriarch of our bloodline has high hopes for him. Don’t let him get distracted.”

“Dad, there’s no need for you to worry about that. Wei’er has true willpower. He won’t be rattled by that son of a bitch.” Fang Xiushan smiled.

“The direct bloodline is rapidly declining,” said the old man confidently, his eyes flickering as if with fire. “Fang Hehai has been missing for years, and although his life force flame has not been extinguished, if he were capable of returning, he would have long since done so. 2

“His son Fang Xiufeng agreed to guard Planet South Heaven for 100,000 years for his crippled son. All of that has doomed the direct bloodline to fall!

“It has also ensured that our bloodline will once again become the next lords of the Fang Clan, and the new direct bloodline!

“Years ago, Fang Hehai suppressed me, and his son Fang Xiufeng suppressed you. In this generation, our Wei’er will definitely rise to prominence. That insignificant Fang Hao will be nothing more than a mere stepping stone to him.” The old man flicked his sleeve.

Time passed. For two days, Meng Hao did not leave his residence. He sat there meditating, doing breathing exercises to absorb Immortal qi. Those two days were like an entire month spent on Planet South Heaven. Being able to practice cultivation like this was of great benefit to Meng Hao.

He pulled out the heart of his second true self and began to nourish it with the Immortal qi near his villa.

It was about noontime when Meng Hao opened his eyes from his trance to slap his bag of holding and produce a jade slip that was glowing brightly. He quickly scanned it with divine sense.

“Hao’er, come to the main temple.” It was the voice of the Grand Elder, and in response, Meng Hao smiled coldly. He put the jade slip away and walked out of the residence. The first thing he saw in the courtyard was Fang Xi. He had dark circles under his eyes, and his aura was incredibly weak.

The meat jelly and the parrot were currently taking turns bombing him indiscriminately with various arguments.

As soon as Fang Xi saw Meng Hao, he hurried to his feet and looked over at Meng Hao with an expression of both madness and veneration.

"Coz, you're incredible," he called out. "Having these two following you day in and day out, and living to tell the tale, it must be so hard. Coz, don't worry. I'll definitely learn the ways of a sharp tongue!" Fang Xi gritted his teeth with resolve.

A strange expression could be seen on Meng Hao's face, and he cleared his throat, unsure of exactly what to say. Then he saw the determination in Fang Xi's eyes, and he patted his shoulder and left the courtyard.

"Speech is endowed by Heaven, but requires tempering," he thought. "If he can endure the training provided by the meat jelly and the parrot, then he will eventually gain the long-windedness of the meat jelly, and the acidic speech of the parrot." Clearing his throat again, he hurried toward the main temple.

The ancestral mansion was huge, and flight was prohibited there. It took Meng Hao two full hours to stroll all the way to the temple. When he got there, he could see tens of thousands of clan members, as well as the Grand Elder, filling the area, seated cross-legged.

As soon as he saw Meng Hao, the Grand Elder's face broke out in a kind smile, and he nodded his head.

"Hao'er, your Immortal's cave is some distance away. How about this, I'll give you a command medallion that gives you special privileges in the ancestral mansion. Other than some specially restricted areas, you will now be able to fly wherever you wish." With a smile, he handed Meng Hao a violet jade slip. When the onlookers saw this happening, they gaped in shock and jealousy.

Normally speaking, only Elders were permitted to fly inside the ancestral mansion. Of the members of the Junior generation, only Fang Wei had the honor of being able to do so. Now, Meng Hao did too.

Meng Hao accepted the jade slip. If he didn't trust his own judgement, then it would seem for all intents and purposes that the Grand Elder really did like him a lot. Considering his position as Grand Elder, it appeared as if what he was doing was not only a true kindness, but at the same time, just and even-handed. He was doing his best to follow the clan's rules.

“Today, many clan members have gathered to bear witness to an important event!” the Grand Elder proclaimed.

“Years ago, Hao’er became weak with illness. His Seventh Year Tribulation caused many clan members to worry greatly about him. As for me, when I saw a young lad like him enduring such incredible suffering, it also pained my heart.

“Thankfully, the Immortals are blessing the Fang Clan, and an Outsider came, providing us with a way to deal with the problem. Fang Xiufeng and his wife took the child away, leaving the Nirvana Fruits behind with the clan.”

Meng Hao stood in front of the Grand Elder, staring in shock. From the way the old man was speaking, and the expression on his face, it didn’t seem at all like he was going to delay the matter; rather, it looked like he was really going to hand the Nirvana Fruits over.

“Don’t tell me I was overthinking things...?” thought Meng Hao.

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1. Fang Xiushan’s name in Chinese is 方秀山 fāng xiù shān. Xiu means ‘elegant’ or ‘handsome.’ Shan means ‘mountain.’ It’s very similar to Fang Xiufeng’s name. The Xiu in both names is the same, which makes sense since they are of the same generation. The final character in Fang Xiushan means ‘mountain’ whereas the final character in Fang Xiufeng’s name means ‘(mountain) peak’ or ‘summit.’ The final character in Fang Xiufeng’s name actually has the ‘mountain’ component as part of the character. Look at the two names side by side and you will see what I mean. In the final character of Fang Xiufeng’s name, you can see the mountain squished on the left side of the character. Fang Xiushan 方秀山. Fang Xiufeng 方秀峰.
2. Fang Hehai’s name in Chinese is 方贺海 fāng hè hǎi – He means “congratulate.” Hai means “sea”.

# Chapter 900: Third Grandpa

“Years ago, the Patriarchs who are now in secluded meditation personally said that these Nirvana Fruits were to be returned to Hao’er when he came back to the sect. What once belonged to him, will always belong to him!

“It doesn’t matter that he only just arrived and is not yet familiar with the clan, or that his cultivation base is not at the proper stage to assimilate the Nirvana Fruits, or that he has not performed any meritorious service to the clan!

“No.... He is the eldest grandson of the direct bloodline, and was once a blazing son of the Fang Clan. He has endured many hardships over the years, and as such, now that he has returned to the clan, none of those other things matter. It is as if they don’t exist!

“These two Nirvana Fruits are his!

“Today, I will take the responsibility to give him these Nirvana Fruits! If the Patriarchs come out of meditation in the future and ask about the matter, I will assume all responsibility!” The Grand Elder’s words were spoken decisively, and his face was very solemn. When it came to the part about the past, he sighed emotionally.

Many of the surrounding Elders had looks of surprise written on their faces, and those from the direct bloodline seemed, at first shocked, but then excited.

Meng Hao was panting as he looked at the Grand Elder speaking so warmly. Meng Hao had never imagined that the Grand Elder would say such things in front of so many people.

“Don’t tell me... I really misjudged the situation?” thought Meng Hao. “Impossible! He’ll definitely say something more.” Meng Hao took a deep breath and calmed himself.

“Fang Hao!” the Grand Elder said suddenly. His eyes shone as he looked at Meng Hao. “Remember, you will always be a member of the Fang Clan.

The blood of the Fang Clan runs through your veins. You can always determine what will happen to you in the future, but you can never make any decisions regarding your birth!

“Your surname is Fang!

“We Elders are old, and the Patriarchs are even more ancient. Even if they are still alive now, they will eventually perish. But you... you are a future blazing sun of the Fang Clan! You are the hope for the future.

“You must work hard in your cultivation. The day will surely come in which you will grow into a mighty tree that stretches up into the Heavens!” Grand Elder Fang Tongtian seemed quite excited. As he spoke, he raised his hands up, clasped them together, and then bowed toward the rear of the temple.

“Respected Patriarchs. On this day, I, Fang Tongtian, ask all of these clan members to bear witness to the return of the Nirvana Fruits to Fang Hao!” With that, he lifted his right hand up into the air and made a grasping motion.

Immediately, shocking rumbling filled the sky, echoing out in all directions. A huge vortex appeared in midair, and as it spun, it slowly revealed some sort of celestial abode.

A tall pagoda could be seen, glowing with boundless light that attracted all eyes. The nearby Fang Clan members saw the pagoda and began to cry out in shock.

“It’s the Ancestral Treasure Pagoda!!”

“In the Fang Clan, only precious treasures can be placed within the Ancestral Treasure Pagoda!!”

“The pagoda itself is a precious treasure left behind by the first generation Patriarch!”

“Even if Heaven and Earth were destroyed, the Ancestral Treasure Pagoda would survive. Even the Grand Elder can only exercise limited control over it to retrieve items. He says the name, and the pagoda will send the item out.”

Meng Hao couldn't believe it. What was happening went completely contrary to his sense of judgement. Everything that was happening was the opposite of how he had expected it to be. His heart was now starting to pound with shock.

He had great faith in his sense of judgement, but what was happening right now was impossible to disbelieve.

The Grand Elder took a deep breath, then performed a double handed incantation gesture. Finally, he shouted, "Ancestral Treasure Pagoda, please produce the Nirvana Fruits!"

Immediately, rumbling could be heard, and more beams of brilliant light shot out. At the same time, a jade box flew out from the pagoda. In the blink of an eye, it had already sped out of the vortex and landed in the Grand Elder's hands.

After that, the vortex up above gradually faded away, obscuring the treasure pagoda, which disappeared from sight.

Meng Hao was panting as he stared at the jade box. Even now, he still couldn't believe that the Grand Elder was simply going to hand the Nirvana Fruits over to him.

He had assumed it would be difficult to get them, but it had turned out to be quite the opposite. It all seemed too simple.

The Grand Elder unhesitatingly opened the box and lifted it up for all the surrounding clan members to see.

Meng Hao immediately caught sight of two withered fruits. They were so dried up that it seemed as if the slightest breeze might cause them to vanish. As soon as he laid eyes on them, Meng Hao's blood surged in his veins, and he felt a sensation like that of a summoning. He was immediately able to tell that these were, in fact, Nirvana Fruits.

"Nirvana Fruits!!"

"Years ago, I saw Hao'er's two Nirvana Fruits, and those are definitely them!"

Many of the surrounding direct bloodline clan members were shocked, especially Meng Hao's 19th Uncle.

"Those are Nirvana Fruits!"

Meng Hao panted as the Grand Elder looked over at him with glittering eyes. Suddenly, a thought occurred to Meng Hao.

"Maybe he's giving them to me because he intends to send someone to steal them from me?" Meng Hao still had faith in his own judgement, and he just couldn't believe that the grand Elder would hand over the Nirvana Fruits so lightly.

The Grand Elder suddenly tossed the jade box out into the air toward Meng Hao, who caught it. As soon as he touched the box, the blood in his veins seemed to boil.

"There is one more thing that I must say in the presence of all you clan members," said the Grand Elder, looking around with coldly glowing eyes. "Let me make one thing very clear.

"These Nirvana Fruits belong to Hao'er, and now, he has them in hand. Perhaps there will be people who harbor malicious intentions. However, in all of Planet East Victory, neither the Church of the Blood Orchid nor the Puppet God Sect would dare to try to steal a precious treasure of the Fang Clan. Even now that they are in Hao'er's possession instead of the clan's, they still wouldn't dare.

"Regarding the other sects around here, they would be even less willing. When it comes to people not from Planet East Victory, we have the East Heaven Gate, which restricts most people from entering. Therefore, if Hao'er's Nirvana Fruits turn up missing, then the only culprits would be other members of the Fang Clan!

"Therefore, do not blame me for reminding all of you that if any person steals the Nirvana Fruits from Hao'er, I will have no choice but to carry out the will of the Patriarchs and exterminate that person's entire bloodline! Fang Heshan, your bloodline would do well to keep this in mind!" As he spoke the final words, the Grand Elder's eyes shone with cold light as he stared at Fang Wei's grandfather. The old man's face was

unsightly, and he bowed his head in acknowledgement. 1

“The rules of the clan must be complied with. Today, I swear an oath that if anyone dares to steal Hao’er’s Nirvana Fruits, I will without fail take action. Furthermore, if I myself have any selfish thoughts regarding the matter, the Heavens shall eradicate my soul!” As soon as the words left his mouth, rumbling sounds could be heard up above; Oath Thunder, which indicated that he was swearing upon the Dao.

The other clan members were shaken. Moments ago, some of them had actually harbored some malicious intentions. As of this moment, however, those malicious intentions were completely wiped away.

Meng Hao’s mind trembled even harder. He really couldn’t believe everything that was happening. However, the facts were right in front of him, and the Grand Elder had even gone so far as to swear an oath.

“Perhaps I was actually wrong....” Meng Hao thought. “But, how come I still feel like the Grand Elder is putting on an act.... Of all the things he’s said, what is true and what is false?” Meng Hao didn’t say anything. He took a deep breath, put the Nirvana Fruits away, and then bowed deeply toward the Grand Elder.

The Grand Elder looked at Meng Hao, his kind smile wider than ever.

“Hao’er,” he said loudly, “I’ve already made arrangements for the Rainbow Immortal Evanescence Pills. Seven batches are really too much, so you’ll be given five batches!

“As for the Immortal’s cave, you can switch at any time. It doesn’t matter what arrangements have been made, I have the authority to make these decisions!” The surrounding clan members’ hearts trembled.

Now, they looked at Meng Hao in a completely different light than before.

“All of you are dismissed,” said the Grand Elder, waving his arm. “Hao’er, you come with me.” As he led Meng Hao inside the temple, the surrounding clan members burst into conversation. The events that had just occurred would surely spread through the entire clan in a very short

period of time.

Meng Hao took a deep breath and suppressed his suspicions as he followed the Grand Elder into the temple.

The temple was quiet, and nobody was inside other than Meng Hao and the Grand Elder.

As soon as they were inside, the Grand Elder turned and looked at Meng Hao. His expression was one of approval and reminiscence, as if looking at Meng Hao caused him to remember things which had happened in the past.

“Grand Elder....” Meng Hao said softly.

“When no one else is around, you can call me Third Grandpa,” said the Grand Elder. “Your grandfather is my older brother, and he used to occupy the position of Grand Elder. However, he went missing, and your Second Grandpa and his bloodline are up to no good....” He sighed.

“Therefore, the Patriarchs asked me to assume the title of Grand Elder. The Fang Clan has no Clan Lord, and since the Patriarchs are normally in secluded meditation, the Grand Elder is responsible for just about everything in the clan.

“I... am also a member of the direct bloodline,” he said quietly. “Your grandfather and I are blood brothers.

“However, from the moment I took on the position and responsibilities of Grand Elder, I officially belonged to no bloodline. I maintain the entire clan’s operations, and have to keep a balanced relationship with all the different bloodlines.

“There are many things in which... I have no power. My heart lies with our bloodline, but my position forces me to be unbiased in everything. All my decisions... must be in accord with the clan rules!

“This is the only occasion in which I asserted my authority and made a decision unilaterally, and gave you your Nirvana Fruits!” The Grand Elder looked kindly at Meng Hao, almost as if he were looking at his own grandson.

"I have no son, and since your grandfather is my Senior in the bloodline, it means that his grandson is also my grandson.

"Grand Eld—" almost as soon as Meng Hao began to speak the words, the Grand Elder scowled. Meng Hao quickly said, "Third Grandpa!"

His heart was filled with complex emotions. He still felt that something fishy was going on, but he couldn't figure out what it was that made him feel so uneasy.

"Hao'er, these two Nirvana Fruits are now several hundred years old, and have long since dried up. However, they are precious treasures formed from the Fang Clan's bloodline. Therefore, they won't wither away. As long as you have some Spirit Extract, you can return them to their previous state.

"The next step you need to take is to cultivate these Nirvana Fruits on a daily basis. Fuse as much Spirit Extract as you can into them. Because they belong to you, you can actually absorb them very easily. Once you absorb them... your cultivation base will advance by leaps and bounds. You can easily advance to be the Number One Chosen in the Fang Clan, and become the blazing sun that you once were!

"Remember, you must absorb them as quickly as possible. This might be shocking to the clan, but the longer you wait, the more likely it will be that someone will recklessly try to make a move against you. However, once you absorb them, they won't be able to do anything.

"Hao'er, remember, absorb them as quickly as possible. Third Grandpa has bought you some time, but I'm afraid it won't be much."

Meng Hao nodded in acknowledgement, but inside, his heart was thumping.

"Spirit Extract...." he thought. "Is it possible that my feelings of suspicion have something to do with the Spirit Extract?"

"Another thing," said the Grand Elder. "The Spirit Extract you need to absorb the Nirvana Fruits requires your own blood to be part of the mixture. That's something nobody else would have access to. Therefore,

you don't need to worry about that aspect. How about this: I noticed that the Immortal's cave you selected has a medicinal plant garden. Assumably, you know something of the Dao of alchemy.

"Why don't you go to the Fang Clan's Dao of Alchemy Division. You can use your merit points to get some medicinal plants and Spirit Extract formulas. Spirit Extract is easy to concoct, so making it yourself will be the safest thing." The Grand Elder seemed very sincere in his words. Perhaps what he had said was coincidental, but the result was that all of Meng Hao's conjectures were shattered.

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1. Fang Heshan's name in Chinese is 方贺山 fāng hè shān. He means "congratulations." Shan means "mountain." Fang Wei's Grandfather's name is similar to Meng Hao's Grandfather's name in much the way Fang Xiushan's and Fang Xiufeng's names are similar. With Fang Hehai and Feng Heshan, the final character difference is that Meng Hao's grandfather has the character "Sea" and Fang Wei's grandfather has the character "Mountain".

# Chapter 901: A Thorough Investigation

Meng Hao silently clasped hands and bowed deeply to the Grand Elder, who looked on with a kind smile as Meng Hao left.

Finally, the Grand Elder was the only one who remained in the temple. Gradually, the kind look faded away, to be replaced by a tranquil calm. However, deep within his eyes, a sinister coldness flickered, something no one would be able to detect.

He turned, and headed deeper into the temple.

A cold voice suddenly echoed out within the temple, causing the Grand Elder to stop in his tracks for a moment.

“Thank you.”

“I’m not helping you,” the Grand Elder replied, “I’m just following the clan rules. Everything... is for the clan!”

Meng Hao sped through the ancestral mansion in a bright beam of light until he reached his Immortal’s cave. As soon as he set foot into the courtyard, he saw Fang Xi sitting there quietly in front of the meat jelly and parrot.

Considering how mentally preoccupied he was, Meng Hao walked past them and sat down cross-legged in his residence. Eyes glittering, he pulled out the box containing the Nirvana Fruits and looked down at it.

“Contrary to expectation... the Grand Elder really did hand it over to me....

“Nothing he said in the temple seemed fake, but I still can’t shake the feeling... that there was more to what he was saying than what was on the surface.”

Meng Hao wasn’t acting paranoid. After stepping into the cultivation world, things had not always gone as he had expected. He knew that if he wasn’t constantly on the alert, he could easily have ended up perishing on multiple occasions.

He was also aware that he was in danger here in the Fang Clan. If he wasn't cautious in everything, he could easily find himself in a deadly situation.

"There must be something wrong with the Nirvana Fruits themselves!" he thought, his eyes glittering. He was still sticking to his original judgement of the Grand Elder; none of the things the old man had said could change that. Finally, he looked down at the box and slowly opened it up.

A faint pressure began to emanate from within the box as Meng Hao looked in thoughtful silence at the two withered fruits inside. Each of them was about the size of an infant's fist.

The blood in his veins surged, a bloodline connection to the fruits that caused Meng Hao to suddenly feel a twinge of doubt regarding his judgement.

"These truly are Nirvana Fruits, and they're definitely stimulating my blood. It seems like... they really are the Nirvana Fruits I produced all those years ago.

"Don't tell me that I really was thinking too much into things?" He sighed and then slowly picked one of the Nirvana Fruits up. As soon as he touched it, the reaction from his blood was even stronger, as if it longed to assimilate the fruit. He placed it directly in front of his face and looked at it closely.

"I need a lot of Spirit Extract to return these Nirvana Fruits to their original state. At that point, I can absorb them...." He sighed again and then began to place the Nirvana Fruit back into its box. It was at this point that, all of a sudden, his hand stopped in place, and a bright gleam appeared in his eyes.

"Wait, something's off. The aura of Time on these Nirvana Fruits... is not that of only a few hundred years!!" Panting, he slowly lifted the Nirvana Fruit back up and stared at it closely. After a long moment, a grim expression filled his face.

Meng Hao had cultivated the magic of Time in the past, and had used

Time-based divine abilities. Therefore, there were few people who could accurately judge matters of Time the way he could. Although the auras of the Nirvana Fruits were incredibly weak, they had been perfectly preserved inside the jade box. Because of that, the aura of Time was still there, and even though it was almost impossible to detect, Meng Hao... could sense it!

This was something that nobody, not even the Grand Elder, could possibly have predicted.

“It’s time to find out exactly how old these particular Nirvana Fruits are!” He performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, unleashing Time magic. He made a sealing mark, and then the light of augury could be seen in his eyes as he slowly stripped away the layers of mystery that surrounded the fruit.

100 years. 200 years. 300 years....

Two hours passed, after which Meng Hao began to breathe heavily.

“10,000 years already!” By this point, he could determine with absolute certainty that this Nirvana Fruit was not his. A cold light flickered in his eyes, and after taking a deep breath, he continued to utilize Time magic to determine exactly how old the Nirvana Fruit was.

15,000 years. 20,000 years. 25,000 years....

If Meng Hao didn’t possess eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal, and have an Immortal meridian inside of him that was eighty percent complete, then he definitely would not have been able to use Time magic for such an extended length of time. The sun soon set, and the moon rose high into the sky. A tremor ran through Meng Hao; his cultivation base was almost thoroughly exhausted... However, he was finally able to roughly determine the true age of the Nirvana Fruit.

“More than... 100,000 years!!”

Meng Hao panted, and a look of disbelief could be seen on his face. He then glanced over at the second Nirvana Fruit. To his senses, both seemed to be exactly the same.

"They both exceed 100,000 years!"

"These aren't MY Nirvana Fruits! Whose are they?" Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and as of this moment his faith in his own judgement was stronger than ever. The Grand Elder definitely had some sinister motive in giving him these Nirvana Fruits.

"The problem doesn't lie with the Spirit Elixir, nor in the words he spoke. Instead... the problem lies in that which I would least suspect... the Nirvana Fruits themselves!" His face darkened.

"Now that I think about it, one of the things he emphasized the most, the part that seemed to be spoken out of care for me, was the part about absorbing the Nirvana Fruits as quickly as possible. That part... is definitely suspicious!" Killing intent flickered in Meng Hao's eyes. As of now, he was certain that if he tried to absorb the Nirvana Fruits, he would find himself in some sort of deadly crisis.

Snorting coldly, Meng Hao put the Nirvana Fruits back in the box, then strode out into the courtyard and interrupted the duel between Fang Xi and the parrot and meat jelly.

"Fang Xi," he said, "have you heard of anyone else in the clan producing Nirvana Fruits?"

Fang Xi looked completely exhausted, although a gleam of stubbornness and even excitement could be seen in his eyes. When he heard Meng Hao's question, he gaped in shock.

"No, I haven't," he replied. "Only Nirvana Flowers, but those are kind of useless. The only person to ever produce Nirvana Fruits is you.... Eee? Wait, now that I think about it, there's a rumor that the first generation Patriarch produced Nirvana Fruits. Why, what's wrong?"

Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and he promptly avoided answering the question. However, more feelings of suspicion rose up in his heart.

"The Nirvana Fruits of the first generation Patriarch," he thought. "They would definitely be considered a precious treasure. Why would the Grand Elder give them to me? Apparently, these Nirvana Fruits are incredibly

ancient, over 100,000 years old....”

Starting the next day, Meng Hao made his way around the ancestral mansion filled with doubts, although no trace of his feelings could be seen on his face. He met quite a few clan members, and went to quite a few different buildings. He did his best to act exactly as a clan member would who had been missing for years, and finally returned to the clan. For example... he thirstily devoured information about the clan's history.

Everything he did seemed completely normal, and not suspicious in any way. Days passed. About a week later, Meng Hao's interest in the Clan History Pavilion seemed to grow deeper.

Much of the information about the clan's history was recorded there, and Meng Hao often showed up to pore through the records, which no one found strange. There were a vast quantity of jade slips filled with information about past events. Unfortunately, there wasn't much information about clan Patriarchs, usually just a sentence or two, or a brief description.

Half a month passed. Occasionally, the Grand Elder would kindly summon him and remind him to concoct the Spirit Elixir as soon as possible, and then absorb the Nirvana Fruits. In the end, Meng Hao finally managed to piece together a relatively intact story from all of the scattered bits of information he had found.

Currently, he sat cross-legged in his residence, eyes closed as he reviewed all of the information he had gathered in the past days.

“A sixth generation Patriarch, with an exceedingly high cultivation base, went into secluded meditation for a single day... and suddenly died!

“A tenth generation Patriarch was also in secluded meditation... and suddenly died!

“The same thing happened to a thirteenth generation Patriarch and a sixteenth generation Patriarch. Both of them went into secluded meditation and then... suddenly died!

“It wasn't just them. In the past 100,000 years, there were other Chosen

and various clan members who went into secluded meditation and then mysteriously died.”

All of this was information he had discovered in the jade history slips, tiny clues and scraps of knowledge that at first seemed unremarkable.

Although they didn’t seem out of the ordinary when taken alone, Meng Hao, being in the crisis that he was, had discovered all the information and organized all the clues. In the end, an intense desire to kill rose up in his heart.

“Roughly 30,000 years ago, the frequency of the sudden deaths decreased. Nowadays, they rarely occur.” When he opened his eyes, they shone with a bright light.

“After tracking down more information about those ancestors who had died... there was one common factor connecting all of them together. Some of them went directly into the Ancestral Treasure Pagoda, and others traded merit points to acquire rewards from the same pagoda.

“That’s definitely suspicious. Throughout the past 100,000 years, many clan members have earned rewards from the Ancestral Treasure Pagoda. These people were the only ones who died suddenly. It does seem suspicious, but somewhat circumstantial.

“Until....” Meng Hao patted his bag of holding to produce a jade slip. His eyes began to glow coldly.

“Until I found out this bit of information about the last clan member to suddenly die, 30,000 years ago, information recorded in the diary of his son!

“Just before dying, he managed to pass word to his son that he was going to assimilate an object belonging to an ancestor. It was something no one in the past had ever succeeded in doing. Furthermore, anyone else who had attempted to accomplish the same feat had died. However, word had been passed down by one of the ancestors that if someone could successfully absorb it, it would solve the riddle of the Fang Clan bloodline!”

Meng Hao took a deep breath and closed his eyes. After a moment, they opened again, and were extremely calm. There were no waves of shock or astonishment as he looked down at the jade box.

"If my speculations are correct, most, if not all, of those people suddenly died for exactly the same reason. And that reason was none other than these two Nirvana Fruits!"

"These Nirvana Fruits... originally belonged to that ancient ancestor!" A cold smile broke out on Meng Hao's face.

"The Grand Elder is pushing me to absorb them because he wants me to experience that same sudden death!"

"The Grand Elder gave me the Nirvana Fruits in front of everyone, so that it would be no secret. All the things he said, even that biased oath, all seemed extremely aboveboard and honest."

"Therefore, if I died while absorbing the Nirvana Fruits, just like everyone else who has attempted to do so, he would have done nothing except lead me in that direction with his words. Any blame for my death would have been placed solely on the Nirvana Fruits."

"Quite a flawless plan. I would die a meaningless death, and the Grand Elder might even hold an incredible funeral service for me...." Meng Hao's smile became even colder than before.

# Chapter 902: The Fang Clan's Dao of Alchemy

The Grand Elder didn't think he had underestimated Meng Hao, but in the end... that is exactly what he had done.

To the Grand Elder, Meng Hao was simply a member of the Junior generation. However intelligent he might be, he was still just a Junior.

He could never have imagined that Meng Hao had cultivated Time magic, and that because of his unbridled persistence, would need only half a month to sift through the vast clan histories and piece together random clues into the truth!

The two Nirvana Fruits were exactly what Meng Hao had speculated; items belonging to the first generation Patriarch that had been left behind as precious treasures. However, one clan member after another had suddenly died while trying to absorb them. Eventually, they became something like taboo objects.

30,000 years ago, the clan had clamped down on all information regarding the two Nirvana Fruits, and they had been put into long-term storage in the Ancestral Treasure Pavilion. Despite being objects from that first generation Patriarch, they were completely useless.

Nowadays, it was possible that there were a few people in the clan who knew that one of the Patriarchs had left Nirvana Fruits behind, but it would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to find someone who remembered about those clan members suddenly dying.

Not even Meng Hao's father would be aware of such a thing.

Were it not for Meng Hao's suspicious nature, and his ability to use his Time magic to determine the true age of the Nirvana Fruits, then even if he did search through the clan histories, he would never have been able to detect all of the random, inconspicuous clues that he had.

"Well then, what about MY Nirvana Fruits," he thought. "Are they still around... or not?" He looked down at the jade box, a complicated

expression on his face. As of now, Meng Hao realized that all of the spectators who had looked on as the Grand Elder handed him the jade box must have thought that the Nirvana Fruits really did belong to him.

Sometimes, if everyone believes something to be true, then the matter basically becomes true, and cannot be changed.

After a long moment of thought, Meng Hao looked down at the two Nirvana Fruits, and his eyes began to glitter.

"In terms of value, these two Patriarch's Nirvana Fruits are surely priceless.... Based on all the clues I pieced together, those clan members who suddenly died all ended up as desiccated corpses, as if their life force had been sucked away.

"From the look of it, the Nirvana Fruits can't be restored simply by feeding them some Spirit Elixir as the Grand Elder suggested. Doing that will probably only revive them temporarily. Absorbing them during that period of brief restoration will most certainly lead to death.

"That's because fundamentally, they are still dry and withered. Unless.... I can truly and completely restore them. Perhaps... then I actually could absorb them.

"Of course, there must have been clan members who came to that same conclusion, and yet they also failed. Perhaps my line of thinking is just as flawed as theirs.... In that case, perhaps it's simply impossible to gather enough Spirit Elixir to restore them completely!

"If that's the case, then there are two possibilities. One is that not even the Fang Clan... can afford the terrifying wastage of resources that would be required to get enough medicinal plants. After all, the supply of medicinal plants is not infinite. Perhaps it's really impossible to restore the Nirvana Fruits completely, even if you use substitute ingredients in the Spirit Elixir.

"Even more likely than that possibility is the second possibility. Perhaps these Nirvana Fruits were withered from the very moment they were created." Meng Hao's eyes flickered for a moment, after which he patted his bag of holding to produce the copper mirror.

"There's always the chance that I really could restore the Nirvana Fruits to a state of completeness!" Meng Hao was panting, and a strange gleam could be seen in his eyes. Then he thought about his beloved spirit stones, and he gritted his teeth in hesitation.

"There are plenty of Chosen in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, and in the future, I should have plenty of chances to bleed them dry of spirit stones. But if I could restore these two Patriarchs' Nirvana Fruits, then absorb them... then it would be the greatest good fortune I could get here in the Fang Clan!"

"Time to go to where they concoct pills around here!" As of this moment, a gleam of determination could be seen in Meng Hao's eyes.

The next day at dawn, he walked out of his residence to find that Fang Xi was nowhere to be seen.

In the end, Fang Xi felt that he had made great strides in his gift of the tongue, and was ready to graduate to the next level. Therefore, he had decided to test his debating abilities out on the masses.

The meat jelly and the parrot, claiming that it was time to test him out, had gone along to supervise.

The courtyard was silent as Meng Hao transformed into a beam of light and flew toward the direction of the clan's Pill Concocting Quarter.

The Fang Clan was an enormous clan, so they naturally had their own Dao of alchemy, and had set up their own Dao of Alchemy Division. Every cultivator there was drawn from the Fang Clan itself, and no matter what bloodline they came from, once they were inducted they belonged solely to the Dao of Alchemy Division.

The clan's Dao of Alchemy Division was set up outside the ancestral mansion, in its own area. It was almost like a sect, with mountains winding about in all directions, dotted with various pavilions and buildings. Radiant light shone up into the air, and the place pulsed with energy.

The Dao of Alchemy Division was made up of more than 100,000

alchemists, ensuring that the aroma of medicinal pills would always waft about and never disperse. It was always possible to see the colorful aura of medicinal pills, which was beautiful beyond compare.

The Fang Clan's Dao of Alchemy Division had a strict division of ranking among alchemists. It was not like the Violet Fate Sect, which simply divided the higher levels into Furnace Lords and Violet Furnace Lords. In the Fang Clan, the alchemists were organized into nine tiers.

Tier 9 was the absolute peak, whereas tier 1 was the level for novices. Underneath the alchemists were vast numbers of apprentice alchemists, roughly 1,000,000 in total.

When practicing cultivation, medicinal pills were an absolute necessity. That was even more true in the Immortal Realm, in which cultivators cultivated boundless Immortal qi. There simply wasn't enough Immortal qi in the Ninth Mountain and Sea to support all of the cultivators, which meant that they needed to rely on the assistance of the power of plants and vegetation within medicinal pills to condense the vast amount of Immortal qi that they needed.

Because of that, alchemists occupied a very lofty position. Of course, not every clan member was gifted in the Dao of alchemy; people with such talent were not common. This was especially true of tier 6 alchemists, who were quite rare. When it came to tier 9 alchemists, there was only one in the entire Fang Clan, and he was referred to as Pill Elder.

For the most part, he only concocted pills for the clan Patriarchs who were in secluded meditation for long periods of time.

From the moment Meng Hao flew out of the ancestral mansion, he could see the mountains that made up the Fang Clan's Dao of Alchemy Division. As he neared, he could sense a terrifying spell formation that had been set up to block the entrance to the mountains, so he produced his jade identity plaque, whereupon the spell formation flickered. After confirming Meng Hao's identity, bright light spread out over him, stimulating his blood flow. Finally, he was allowed to enter.

The aroma of medicinal pills washed over Meng Hao, and he felt

enlivened. It was a very familiar scent, and it instantly made him recall the Violet Fate Sect. He took a deep breath, and immediately began to analyze what different medicinal plants he could detect in the air, and how they had been blended together.

When it came to the Dao of alchemy, even Pill Demon had to admit that Meng Hao exceeded him. His pill concocting skill had reached a terrifying level.

Mountains could be seen in all directions, and Meng Hao could sense the aura of numerous alchemists. There was also the heat of Earthly fire, making the entire place quite hot. He could see alchemists moving about to and fro among the mountains, although it was more common to see apprentice alchemists in their unique jackets, flying back and forth in beams of colorful light between the various regions that comprised the Dao of Alchemy Division.

"I wonder what the alchemists here are like...?" thought Meng Hao, his eyes gleaming with anticipation.

Clearly, the Grand Elder had made arrangements in advance, because as soon as Meng Hao entered the Dao of Alchemy Division, a middle-aged man flew toward him from a nearby mountain. He landed in front of Meng Hao and then looked him over, sizing him up.

"You're Fang Hao? The one with the 30,000 meter Bloodline Gatebeam?" The man wore a long green robe, and his expression was one of arrogance. The collar of his robe was embroidered with five golden dragons, indicating that he was a tier 5 alchemist.

Meng Hao nodded.

"I really don't know what the Grand Elder was thinking," said the man, looking at Meng Hao a bit impatiently. "It doesn't matter you have a 30,000-meter Bloodline Gatebeam, this is the Dao of Alchemy Division. If you want to study pill concocting, having a strong bloodline won't help you one bit."

"You need to be gifted in the Dao of alchemy to study pill concocting. Can you concoct pills?"

This question caused Meng Hao to hesitate. The Dao of alchemy was vast and limitless, so he wouldn't dare to say that he thoroughly understood pill concocting.

"I understand something about it," he responded.

"Something?" The man didn't seem too pleased. He himself had been immersed in the Dao of alchemy for many years, and the more he understood about it, the more he realized how boundless it was. Even an entire lifetime of hard work was not enough to grasp a tiny corner of it. If someone asked him how much he knew, he would never dare to say that he knew 'something.' At most he would say that he understood 'a bit.'

And yet this young man standing in front of him, a Chosen with a 30,000-meter Bloodline Gatebeam, actually dared to say that he understood 'something' about the Dao of alchemy. Obviously, he knew nothing!

"How many years did you spend formally studying pill concocting?" the man asked coldly, his expression even more displeased than before.

Meng Hao hesitated for a moment and then said, "In terms of formal studying, I guess a little more than a year...."

The man's face darkened, and he impatiently threw a bag of holding toward Meng Hao.

"Inside, you'll find the formula for the Spirit Extract that the Grand Elder wanted you to have, plus ten sets of medicinal plants." The man then waved his hand and sent a wooden placard in his direction.

"Concocting Spirit Extract is much simpler than concocting pills. Just follow the description in the formula and you'll be able to concoct it with no problem. If it's too difficult for you, find an apprentice alchemist to make it for you. If you want to study the Dao of alchemy, you need to start by learning to identify medicinal plants. Take that placard to Alchemy Lodge Peak #7191. Study there for about a hundred years, then come back and find me." With that, the man turned, took about seven or eight steps, then stopped and looked back.

"Don't forget," he said, "the Dao of alchemy is vasty and mighty. In the future, if someone asks you about it, don't give such a wildly arrogant answer. You think that after studying for a year you can know 'something' about the Dao of alchemy?!"

"Furthermore, your 30,000-meter Bloodline Gatebeam doesn't mean anything here. Here, you're not a Chosen, you're just a regular clan member. If you don't have the natural talent, then there's no need to stick around here wasting the clan's resources! Just go back to wherever you came from!"

Having finished reprimanding Meng Hao, the man turned and transformed into a beam of light that shot off into the distance.

Meng Hao smiled wryly. He felt that his answer had been quite appropriate, but it had ended up irritating the man. Meng Hao scanned the bag of holding with divine sense, then pulled out the formula. He looked it over, and found that the Spirit Extract really was incredibly simple to concoct. One didn't need to be an alchemist to concoct it; even an apprentice alchemist could do so.

However, the medicinal plant ingredients were quite expensive, including some medicinal plants that were considered quite rare on Planet South Heaven.. There were enough sets of ingredients to produce ten batches of Spirit Extract.

There was one plant that only had three leaves, and emitted Immortal qi.

"Three Immortals Leaf!" he thought, his eyes glittering. Seeing that particular plant helped him understand exactly what resources were at the disposal of the Fang Clan's Dao of Alchemy division.

"If I can have access to plants like Three Immortals Leaf, that means this Dao of Alchemy Division is like a Holy Land!" Meng Hao's eyes glittered, and his breathing sped up a bit. He actually wasn't sure exactly what level his Dao of alchemy had reached. After all, when it came to many of the medicinal pills that were frequently used to gauge the strength of someone's Dao of alchemy, he had always lacked some of the key ingredients, and had never had the chance to concoct them.

"Well, I might as well go see how strong my Dao of alchemy is in comparison to the Fang Clan's Dao of alchemy!" Clutching the wooden placard in his hand, he followed the map toward Alchemy Lodge Peak #7191.

# Chapter 903: A Brief Glimpse of Cutting Edge Talent

The mountains that made up the Fang Clan's Dao of Alchemy Division stretched out boundlessly in all directions. There were 10,000 mountains in the inner region that were occupied by alchemists, which were surrounded by 100,000 additional mountains.

The higher a given alchemist's ranking, the closer that alchemist could get to the center of all the mountains.

The 100,000 outer mountains were divided into ten districts, which were areas in which apprentice alchemists studied. They were known as Alchemy Lodges, and were comprised of 10,000 peaks each.

Meng Hao's destination was Alchemy Lodge Peak #7191.

Thankfully, there was no prohibition on flight here, otherwise it would have taken Meng Hao a very long time to reach his destination. He shot forward at top speed and, with the help of the map, soon reached an ancient and primitive-looking mountain peak.

The peak was not sharp and tall, and in fact, it appeared as if the top had been directly cut off to create what looked like a huge public square. Currently, several hundred people sat cross-legged surrounding a raised central platform, listening to an old man give a lecture about medicinal plants. He wore a long robe, the collar of which was embroidered with a single golden dragon.

The old man rambled on and on, occasionally holding out a medicinal plant. Every so often, one of those plants would bloom, and would be surrounded by multicolored light. The audience members were apparently experiencing significant enlightenment as they watched.

In the audience of hundreds of cultivators could be seen men and women, old people and young, all of whom were members of the Fang Clan, come here to study pill concocting. Of course, everyone had to start out as an apprentice alchemist.

No one paid much attention to Meng Hao's arrival. He sat down off to the side to listen to the old man's lecture.

"This is Godshine Flower," the old man said coolly, "which is also known as Sunbirth Leaf. On any given day, its medicinal strength is at its peak at high noon. Make sure to pay close attention to this flower's vein pattern, because it looks very similar to Godrain Flower." With that, he pulled out another medicinal plant and began to introduce it.

Occasionally, the old man would look out at the crowd, and when he saw the earnest expressions of the faces of the apprentice alchemists, he felt quite a sense of accomplishment.

He was a mere tier 1 alchemist, and had virtually no hope of ever being promoted for the rest of this life. Therefore, he had been assigned to deliver lectures on plants and vegetation to the apprentice alchemists. It was only during times like these that he could enjoy the sensation of a crowd looking at him enviously.

Even as he continued his lecture, a glimmer of displeasure suddenly flickered within him. He had just seen a young man in the audience frowning at what he was saying. At first, he didn't pay the matter much attention, but over the course of the next two hours, he realized that the young man had frowned seven or eight times.

That made the old man more and more irritated. He had been giving lectures here for many years, and every single apprentice alchemist looked at him with deep respect and courtesy. Even Chosen from other clans' Dao of Alchemy Divisions would recognize his authority in this place.

The old man had never encountered someone like Meng Hao, who frowned at what he said. The more he saw this happening, the more offensive he found it.

Meng Hao continued to listen to the lecture. Eventually the old man began to talk about Brightmoon Vine, and Meng Hao frowned again. He could clearly tell that this old man had an incorrect understanding of plants and vegetation. He was making mistakes that, if the audience of apprentice alchemists paid attention to, could cause problems for them in

the future. They might even pay heavy prices before they understood the truth.

“This type of tree grows in the frigid weather of regions that were once extremely hot. It is called Midwinter Tree. When it is burned, it can produce a type of sap that is considered a precious treasure, the name of which is Midwinter Sap!” As soon as he finished speaking, he saw Meng Hao frown yet again. That made it more than ten times in which Meng Hao had frowned. At long last, the old man couldn’t take it any more. Face cold, he pointed directly at Meng Hao.

“You! What’s your name!?” he asked, his voice rumbling like thunder. The surrounding apprentice alchemists had just been listening to his lecture in a virtual trance, and were instantly shocked. They quickly followed the line of the man’s finger to see Meng Hao.

“Meng Hao,” replied Meng Hao coolly. “Or, you can also call me Fang Hao.”

“You have no regard for your elders and betters! In my role as an alchemist, I will ask you, an apprentice alchemist, a question. Let’s see if you dare to stand up and answer!” The old man chuckled coldly.

Meng Hao had no desire to get into an argument with the old man, so he casually stood up.

“Do you acknowledge your error?” the old man demanded. “Well, too late! Let me ask you: why was your attention wandering during my lecture? Why did you keep frowning? If you don’t enjoy listening to my lectures here, then you can just get lost! You’re not permitted to stick around here and annoy people!

“Your name’s Fang Hao, huh? From now on, you are not welcome here!” He snorted coldly. This old man was not a tolerant person, so Meng Hao’s continued frowning had really been a provocation, or even a challenge.

Meng Hao frowned, and an icy coldness could be seen within his eyes. He looked at the old man for a moment, but didn’t say anything. As he turned to leave, the old man snorted again.

"Did I say you could leave? If you can't explain why you were frowning just now, then I'll throw you out! You can't just walk away!"

Meng Hao stopped in place and slowly looked back at the old man. Then, he began to speak, his voice calm.

"The first time I frowned was when you mentioned Sunbirth Leaf. Although that leaf's medicinal strength is indeed greatest at high noon, that is not a suitable time to harvest it, let alone to use it to concoct medicine. At that time, the Yang energy in the leaf is too intense. If you concoct medicine with it then, and it is not the primary ingredient, then it doesn't matter. However, if you use it as the primary ingredient, the concoction will fail! The correct time to harvest said leaf is at a specific time AFTER high noon!"

Meng Hao's voice boomed out in all directions as he took a step forward toward the man.

The old man's face darkened, and he was just about to say something when Meng Hao continued to speak.

"The second time I frowned was when you talked about Groundfall Root. What you said was completely incorrect. You said that Groundfall Root contains an aura of rot. However, true Groundfall Root is the part that connects the plant to the ground. Half an inch is underground, the other half is above ground! If you harvest the incorrect part of the plant, then any pill you concoct will be black and full of toxins. It would be detrimental to anyone who consumed it."

As he spoke, he took another step forward, and his energy surged.

The old man's face flickered. When it came to Sunbirth Leaf, he had an argument that he could make in his defense. But when it came to Groundfall Root, as soon as the words left Meng Hao's mouth, his heart began to thump. He suddenly remembered that when he had attempted to concoct a pill with Groundfall Root in the past, the result was exactly as Meng Hao had described.

"The third time I frowned was when you brought up Tenderwillow Branch. The first half of what you said about it was absolutely correct. If

you take nine of its leaves and refine them together, it will form a true Tenderwillow Leaf. However, you missed something very important; it is vital to collect some of the soil from beneath the tree itself and combine that into the mixture. The reason is that the soil in areas where Tenderwillow Branches grow, when compounded with wood and metallic elements, can purify the metal portion, leaving behind a newborn plant!"

As Meng Hao took another step forward, the old man's face flickered again. Beads of sweat broke out on his forehead, and he subconsciously took a step backward. As Meng Hao neared, the man sensed an amorphous energy that filled him with fear.

Most importantly of all, what Meng Hao had said about the Tenderwillow Leaf left him completely shocked. It was actually the first time he had heard of such a thing. However, it suddenly caused him to think back to a time when he had been invited to visit another alchemist, who at the time happened to be concocting a pill with Tenderwillow Leaf. He had actually put some soil into the mixture. At the time, the old man had been confused as to why he would do that, but too embarrassed to ask about it.

"The fourth time I frowned was when you spoke of Cloudsipping Grass. How could that grass possibly grow inside of clouds, which is exactly what you said? That's nothing but sheer and utter nonsense! It's a grass that grows in mountain streams, surrounded by wisps of cloud and mist. THAT'S why it's called Cloudsipping Grass!" The next step Meng Hao took left the old man completely ashen-faced. Yet again, he subconsciously stepped back. He suddenly remembered that Cloudsipping Grass was exactly as Meng Hao had just described it. When he had talked about it earlier, he had intentionally spouted some hogwash; his explanation actually had nothing to do with reality. That was because he had no idea what the plant really was.

"The fifth time I frowned was when you talked about the Tree of Nine Eyes....

"The sixth time I frowned was because of what you said about Gauzewood Moss....

“The seventh time I frowned....”

Every time he spoke, Meng Hao took another step forward, and the old man’s face grew paler as he fell back in retreat. His expression soon became one of panic, which caused the surrounding apprentice alchemists to stare in shock.

“The twelfth time I frowned was because you said that Brightmoon Vines have flowers that bloom with two different colors. One color is toxic, the other isn’t. You spoke of the plant’s medicinal properties, but then never explained how to tell the difference between the two. That is why I frowned!” Meng Hao advanced with each of his explanations, and the old man fell back. By this point, Meng Hao was now standing on the platform.

“The last time I frowned was when you talked about Midwinter Sap. I have no idea from whom you learned about plants and vegetation, but even though Midwinter Sap can be produced by burning it with a cultivation flame, that will produce an inferior product. The highest quality Midwinter Sap requires magically induced lightning to create!” With that, Meng Hao flicked his sleeve.

Voice echoing, he continued, “The Dao of alchemy is vast and limitless. The number of medicinal plants is like the water in the sea. No one can remember all of them, and the mistakes you made are not unforgivable. However... we are in our clan’s Dao of Alchemy Division. The apprentice alchemists here to listen to your lecture are all fellow clan members. If you know something, then talk about it. If there’s something you’re not clear about, no one will make fun of you for that. That being the case, there is absolutely no reason to make up random garbage! If you do that, these apprentice alchemists might end up paying with their lives because of the mistakes they will make in the future!”

Meng Hao’s words were spoken with little courtesy. Originally, he had intended to simply leave. However, the old man had aggressively provoked him, and as such, he laid bare all of the reasons why he had frowned earlier.

The old man opened his mouth to respond, but there was nothing he could say. His mind spun as he realized that there were indeed aspects of his speech in which he didn't know what he was talking about. However, he had fallen into a habit of lecturing on those things merely based on his own personal experience and judgement.

Currently, his face was as pale as death, and he was trembling. There was nothing he could do to refute Meng Hao's stern criticism. In fact, for some reason, the feeling he got when he looked at Meng Hao was the same feeling of awe he'd had years ago when he was an apprentice alchemist looking at the full alchemists.

Everything Meng Hao had said left him shaken, and actually answered many questions that he himself had wondered about.

In the silence that followed, the surrounding hundreds of Fang Clan apprentice alchemists began to talk.

"Fang Hao.... I just remembered! He's the one with the 30,000-meter Bloodline Gatebeam! His bloodline is inconceivably strong! It's that Fang Hao!!"

"It's really him! He came from Planet South Heaven. Supposedly, he experienced some kind of Seventh Year Tribulation. Now he's back, and not only does he have a strong bloodline, he also managed to silence an alchemist on the subject of plants and vegetation!"

"He's the eldest grandson of the direct bloodline! His bloodline is even stronger than Prince Wei's. I can't believe he's here in the Dao of Alchemy Division!"

"After hearing him talk about all those different medicinal plants, I suddenly feel like I understand them far better than I did before! Could it be that Fang Hao is also an alchemist?"

Meng Hao was just about to leave when the trembling old man stepped forward. Clasping hands, he bowed deeply to Meng Hao.

"Alchemist Fang. Sir, you were right to chide me. My name is Fang Qun, and everything was my fault. Would you mind staying for a moment and

clearing up some of my confusion, Alchemist Fang? I... I actually have some questions about plants and vegetation that I hope you can help me with.” Although Fang Qun seemed a bit embarrassed to say these things, he didn’t hesitate to speak them. 1

His words caused instant excitement among the surrounding apprentice alchemists. They could clearly see that Meng Hao’s skill with plants and vegetation far exceeded that of Fang Qun.

The idea of being able to hear a lecture by an alchemist like that was a rare opportunity, and true good fortune.

“Please, Alchemist Fang, stay for a bit. Give us some pointers!!”

“Alchemist Fang, we have a lot of questions about plants and vegetation! For the sake of us fellow clan members, could you stay and dispel some of our confusion...?”

Everyone began talking at once, clasping hands and bowing. Meng Hao stopped in his tracks and looked around for a moment before nodding.

A cheer of excitement rose up from the enthusiastic crowd.

\*

1. Fang Qun’s name in Chinese is 方群 fāng qún. Qun means ‘group’.

# Chapter 904: Now Let's Throw Down

"Heavenrain Leaf veins will only appear when they are soaked by heavy rainfall. As far as what can types of medicinal pills can be concocted with those veins, I know of 87,645 different types...."

"Golden Mean Tree cannot be used as a primary ingredient. However, you can add it to the mix during the concocting process to increase metal-type energy. Furthermore, it will add a golden color to the medicinal pill."

Meng Hao was currently standing on the platform. He had just introduced a variety of unique medicinal plants that were easily misidentified, and was now fielding questions from the apprentice alchemists.

Fang Qun sat down below, constantly asking questions about various plants and vegetation that he wasn't clear about. He seemed very excited.

"Milky Way Stone isn't really a type of rock. It's actually a type of sea moss that grows in the narrow crevices rocks. Furthermore, the more cracks a stone has, the higher the quality will be."

"Nine Dragons Spice is not naturally occurring. No, it is actually the result of a graft of nine different medicinal plants. The grafting formula is actually a secret, so all I know about it is from my own conclusions based on what I've heard about the pill itself; I can't actually be 100% certain of the exact method of grafting."

Meng Hao spoke patiently to the apprentice alchemists and the excited Fang Qun. The sky was growing dark, but the audience didn't seem tired at all. Quite the opposite. Many of them were excitedly recording the information Meng Hao was giving them onto jade slips.

Soon, the moon hung high in the sky, and yet, nobody had left. Eventually, passing apprentice alchemists from nearby mountains noticed that something was going on, and came over. When they saw that an alchemist was listening to this lecture about plants and vegetation, they were shocked. That was especially true after many of them recognized Fang Qun. In the end, these curious newcomers... didn't leave either.

It didn't take long before the mountain platform was packed tight with, not several hundred people, but several thousand. All types of questions were asked, and there wasn't a single one that Meng Hao couldn't answer.

Some people even started to intentionally ask trick questions, but Meng Hao didn't even need to think before providing an answer. Everything he said was correct and complete, which caused even the questioners trying to trip him up to feel completely astonished.

Eventually, the mountain was packed. The new arrivals, who of course didn't want to leave, had to float in the air nearby to listen.

Meng Hao tried to conclude the lecture on numerous occasions, but there were too many people in the audience, and too many questions. He wanted to leave, but considering that he was trying to rise to prominence in the clan, the Dao of alchemy was probably his best chance to do so. Therefore, he stayed.

Gradually, an entire night passed, and to these alchemy cultivators, Meng Hao's lecture was almost like a sermon about the Dao. More and more apprentice alchemists crowded around. By the time the sun rose, there were over 10,000 people present.

That in and of itself sent the surrounding areas into a commotion. More people approached to hear Meng Hao's lecture, and to ask questions. However, from start to finish, there seemed to be nothing Meng Hao didn't know, and no question that he couldn't answer, or even give him the slightest pause.

Shock spread through all hearts, and soon, some of the other alchemists in the area who had been preparing to give their own lectures noticed. At first they chuckled coldly, but soon their eyes grew wide with disbelief.

"His skill with plants and vegetation... it's actually... it's actually incredibly high!!"

"Heavens! The questions are never-ending, and they touch upon virtually all aspects of plants and vegetation. But this guy can actually answer all of them! What an incredible knowledge base!"

Gradually, the size of the audience grew. Meng Hao spoke for three days straight, and eventually, there were 30,000 people in attendance. The entire world of the apprentice alchemists in the Dao of Alchemy Division was shaken. There were even many tier 1 alchemists who came. As for the tier 2 alchemists, however, most stayed in the inner mountains. They rarely interfered with the affairs of the outer mountains, nor did they pay too much attention to what happened there. After all, most alchemists spent their time in seclusion, concocting pills.

“Three Immortals Leaf is a rare medicinal plant. I would never have expected the Fang Clan’s Dao of Alchemy Division to be able to grow them. If you use this medicinal plant as the main ingredient, a vast amount of medicinal pills can be concocted. Although I haven’t personally concocted anything using Three Immortals Leaf, I’m aware of around one thousand pill formulas that use it.

“Sun Blossom? That’s a legendary medicinal plant that has long since gone extinct. Naturally, I’ve never laid eyes on one, but I’ve heard that if you add Sun Blossom to a medicinal pill, you are certain to produce a one hundred percent consummate pill.” 1

Meng Hao was now seated cross-legged on the platform, smiling as he spoke. Everyone in the audience was still excited. Even after three days, they didn’t seem tired at all. All of them were deeply aware that this was a very rare opportunity for them.

Meanwhile, word spread to the Fang Clan ancestral mansion. Fang Yunyi sat in his Immortal’s cave, listening as an apprentice alchemist gave a lively description of Meng Hao’s lecture on plants and vegetation.

Fang Yunyi’s face darkened, and then after a moment, broke out into a cold smile.

“What does that prove?” Fang Yunyi said coldly. “Any tier 2 alchemist from the inner mountains of the Dao of Alchemy Division could go out and give a lecture on plants and vegetation. Any one of them would draw a crowd of tens of thousands, or even more.

“Piddling Meng Hao. You come here from a backwater place like Planet

South Heaven, so even if you have a bit of skill, it's still bound to be quite limited. You just joined the Dao of Alchemy Division and are already acting so arrogantly? You're nothing but a loser who thinks he's hot stuff." He still constantly brooded over the events that had taken place on Planet South Heaven, and hated Meng Hao to his bones.

He really wanted Prince Wei to go punish Meng Hao. Unfortunately, Prince Wei never did anything, no matter how Fang Yunyi pushed the subject. Now, just as he was managing to quell his frustration, this apprentice alchemist came to tell him about the waves Meng Hao was making in the Dao of Alchemy Division. Finally, he snorted and sent the apprentice alchemist away, then sat there frowning.

"This damned Meng Hao, I can't just let him trot around so happily!" Grinding his teeth, Fang Yunyi produced a transmission jade slip, imprinted it with divine sense as well as some various promises, and then threw it out.

The jade slip immediately shot into the air.

Shortly thereafter, somewhere within the 10,000 inner mountains of the Dao of Alchemy Division, on one particular mountain that was fairly close to the outer mountains, a middle-aged man was concocting some medicinal pills. He wore an alchemist's robe that had two golden dragons embroidered on the collar.

The pill furnace in front of him glowed bright red, and flickered with light. A medicinal aroma wafted out from the furnace, which surrounded the entire mountain and seemed to nourish all of the vegetation in the area.

In the middle of his concocting, a jade slip suddenly appeared. It floated there off to the side, but the middle-aged man ignored it completely, instead continuing with his pill concocting. Two hours passed before the bright red color of the pill furnace began to fade away. When the furnace cooled completely, the man began to murmur to himself.

"I've been working on this batch of Mortality Convergence Pills for three months. It's too bad I wasted so many ingredients.... I wonder if I

succeeded this time. If not, I'm going to have to go get some more medicinal plant ingredients." The man frowned and then waved his hand, causing the jade slip to fly over. After scanning it with divine sense, his eyes began to glitter.

"Fang Hao? Even I've heard of that name recently. He had a 30,000 meter Bloodline Gatebeam. However, in the Fang Clan, you can't only rely on your bloodline.

"Fang Hao might be a Chosen....

"But this is the Dao of Alchemy Division, and things are different here. Nobody cares if you're a Chosen or not. Furthermore, I have no conflicts with Fang Yunyi, and considering what he's offering me, it won't hurt to help him out this once." He hesitated for a moment and looked at the pill furnace. If this batch of pills went bad, then he would have to go get more medicinal plant ingredients, which he really didn't want to do. He thought for a moment, then decided not to refuse Fang Yunyi's request. He quickly headed toward the outer mountains.

"What kind of ability could some trifling clan member from Planet South Heaven have? Besides, skill with plants and vegetation is a low-level fundamental skill, that's all. Any tier 2 alchemist could get a whole bunch of apprentice alchemists to gather around them.

"As for the tier 1 alchemists, well...." He snorted coldly. In the Fang Clan's Dao of Alchemy division, the only tier 1 alchemists who were stationed in the outer mountains were the ones who had no hope of advancing to the next tier.

"7191.... Right, I remember. That place is overseen by Fang Qun." The man chuckled. Fang Qun was the lowest ranking of all the tier 1 alchemists. The fact that he had passed the test was a completely lucky break.

The man flew out of the inner mountains at top speed. Whenever any apprentice alchemists saw him, they respectfully clasped hands and bowed. He hurried to the outer mountains as quickly as possible, and after enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, he caught sight of

Alchemy Lodge Peak #7191. The first thing he saw was the crowd of tens of thousands of apprentice alchemists packed together. It almost looked like a static cyclone.

The sight of it caused the middle-aged man to give a cold harrumph. He was actually a bit offended. Whenever he went to the outer mountains to give lectures, he would usually draw a crowd of about 10,000. However, there were clearly about 30,000 apprentice alchemists in attendance here.

The man neared, but because all of the apprentice alchemists were paying close attention to Meng Hao, no one noticed the newcomer.

The man frowned and then snorted coldly, the sound of which echoed out and caused numerous nearby apprentice alchemists to turn around in shock. When they saw him standing there, their faces fell and they quickly clasped hands in greeting.

“Greetings, Alchemist Xuzhong!” 2

“It’s Alchemist Fang Xuzhong!!”

It didn’t take long before everyone was turning to Fang Xuzhong and bowing in greeting. He nodded back proudly, and proceeded forward. People backed up, creating a path that he followed all the way to the mountain peak, where he stood on the platform next to Meng Hao.

He looked Meng Hao over a few times.

All of the apprentice alchemists, and even Fang Qun, rose to their feet, bowing to Fang Xuzhong with clasped hands.

Meng Hao was the only one who remained seated. It was obvious that this man came with ill intentions, and the measuring look in his eye also contained a bit of scorn.

“So you’re Fang Hao?” he asked coldly.

Meng Hao nodded, after which Fang Xuzhong smiled, and the disdain therein was clear. He waved his sleeve and coldly announced, “You’re only an apprentice alchemist, and yet you dare to give a lecture about plants and vegetation? How scandalous!

“However, I won’t make things hard for you. I’ll ask you about three types of medicinal plants, and if you can’t answer, you will put end to this commotion immediately, and focus on being a good apprentice alchemist instead of arrogantly assuming the mantle of a full alchemist!” After saying these things, Fang Xuzhong suddenly recalled an additional requirement that Fang Yunyi had laid out.

“Also,” he added coldly, “for however long you sowed chaos in the Dao of Alchemy Division with your lecture, you will kneel here for the same length of time!” 3

Meng Hao looked at the arrogant man standing in front of him, and frowned.

“I’m just an apprentice alchemist and you’re a full alchemist. Doesn’t this count as bullying? Also, what happens if I answer your questions correctly?”

“Then you can continue your lecture!” replied Fang Xuzhong with a cold laugh.

Meng Hao hesitated, as if he was debating whether to accept the challenge. Then he looked around, as if he was considering the face he would lose in front of all these people if he didn’t accept. Gritting his teeth, he produced a bag of holding and put it down off to the side. Eyes bloodshot, he looked over at Fang Xuzhong.

“I came here with good intentions to explain matters of plants and vegetation to fellow clan members. You’ve come to stop me. If I lose the challenge, you want me to kneel here in humiliation. However, if you lose, there is no loss on your part. That’s not really fair. Why don’t we REALLY throw down? If you match the number of spirit stones in that bag of holding, then I’ll accept your challenge!

“If not, then I might as well just leave.”

Fang Xuzhong frowned. Coming as he had in his role as a full alchemist really was a case of the big bullying the small. There were a lot of people watching, and he had to consider how the matter would affect their view of him. However, if he didn’t get Meng Hao to kneel, then he wouldn’t be

meeting the requirements laid out by Fang Yunyi. Finally, he looked at Meng Hao and laughed coldly, imagining what it would look like when he was humiliated and kneeling on the ground. He would definitely have to make Fang Yunyi give him an extra bonus as a reward. Without further hesitation, he pulled out a bag of holding and threw it down next to Meng Hao's.

He said nothing, but his eyes glittered coldly.

Meng Hao took a deep breath and licked his lips. A bashful smile appeared on his face, and he even looked a bit embarrassed.

"Many thanks, Alchemist Fang. Now, let's throw down."

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1. Sun Blossom is the plant Meng Hao snatched from the black beetles back in the Ruins of Immortality in [chapter 883](#).
2. Fang Xuzhong's name in Chinese is 方须中 fāng xū zhōng. Xu means 'necessary.' Zhong means 'middle'.
3. In Chinese culture, kneeling on both knees publicly is very humiliating.

# Chapter 905: Plant and Vegetation Throwdown!

Alchemist Lodge Peak #7191 was now surrounded by tens of thousands of apprentice alchemists, all of whom were staring fixedly at Meng Hao and Fang Xuzhong on the platform.

It was especially interesting that there was a wager between the two of them, and the apprentice alchemists couldn't wait to see what happened. Many could read between the lines, and knew that Fang Xuzhong had intentionally come here to stir up trouble with Meng Hao. However, considering that it didn't affect them personally, those people were even more excited than the others. They wanted to see who exactly was better when it came to knowledge of plants and vegetation.

If Meng Hao hadn't just given a three-day lecture on the subject, the apprentice alchemists would not have hesitated even a moment to say that Fang Xuzhong would prevail. Now, however... it was hard to say.

Meng Hao looked extremely bashful as he embarrassedly scanned Fang Xuzhong's bag of holding with divine sense. Then he licked his lips and looked back over at Fang Xuzhong. He felt luckier with every minute that passed. He had never imagined that, having only been in the Dao of Alchemy Division for a few days, there would already be someone who came looking to deliver up spirit stones.

When he realized what he was thinking, he suddenly felt a bit more embarrassed.

Seeing all the eyes focused on him, Fang Xuzhong snorted coldly. He had been immersed in the Dao of alchemy for many years, and was highly proficient when it came to skill with plants and vegetation. As the saying went, his proverbial pill furnace glowed with the bright green of perfection. Actually, he was already qualified to be promoted to a tier 3 alchemist, and as such, was absolutely confident in being able to win the bet.

Were it not for the fact that he was badly in need of alchemy resources, he would never have come here. After all, participating in something like this was really beneath his status.

His expression proud and lofty, Fang Xuzhong raised his hand high and then smacked his bag of holding. Instantly, a medicinal plant appeared in his hand. It was green, and looked no different from an ordinary blade of grass. He waved his hand, sending it flying through the air to hover in front of Meng Hao.

"I won't make things hard for you," he said coolly. "I'll show you three medicinal plants. You simply have to tell me their names and properties. This is the first one." From his perspective, this plant in and of itself was enough to stump his opponent. He planned to show this Fang Hao the height of the Heavens and the depths of the Earth. He would help Fang Hao to know exactly how vastly separated the two of them were in terms of qualifications.

As a tier 2 alchemist, he wanted to ensure a quick victory. Considering his status in the Dao of Alchemy Division, knocking his opponent out of the competition with a single blow would be the most suitable result.

Fang Xuzhong smiled coldly, swished his sleeve, then clasped his hands behind his back and looked arrogantly at Meng Hao. "Forget about this guy," he thought. "Not even a tier 1 alchemist would recognize this medicinal plant."

Meng Hao was smiling just as before as he looked at the medicinal plant.

All of the apprentice alchemists were also staring at it, trying to guess what it was. The tier 1 alchemists in the area were also digging through their memories, and yet, none of them could recall even the slightest scrap of information about a plant like this.

Immediately, a buzz of conversation rose up.

"This can't be right. That medicinal plant doesn't look special at all. It doesn't even look like a medicinal plant! Is it just an ordinary plant from the mortal world?"

"I might not have incredible skill when it comes to plants and vegetation, but I know a bit. However, this plant... is something I've never seen before."

"He definitely deserves to be a tier 2 alchemist. He pulled out a medicinal plant that nobody even recognizes!"

Fang Xuzhong looked haughtily over at Meng Hao.

"If you don't recognize it, then kneel upon this mountain peak for three days, and then screw off." Almost as soon as the words left his mouth, however, Meng Hao suddenly looked up at him and chuckled.

"Alchemist Fang, I never imagined that you would actually possess this type of Wind Spirit Grass. Such a plant is useless for medicinal purposes. However, when struck by a strong wind, it will blossom with a Spirit Flower. That flower can bloom with up to seven colors, with seven being the optimal number. That medicinal flower is one of the most important ingredients used when concocting wind-type medicinal pills.

"Unfortunately, Alchemist Fang, this particular plant of yours has a lot of imperfections. It will only produce a three-colored flower."

Meng Hao's words left the surrounding apprentice alchemists in shock. Even the tier 1 alchemists were astonished. They had never even heard of Wind Spirit Grass, although many knew of Wind Spirit Flower. At this point, they suddenly had an epiphany, and realized the origin of Wind Spirit Flowers.

It was at this point that Meng Hao blew onto the blade of grass. Because of the level of his cultivation base, that breath was like a gale force wind. A rumbling sound filled the area, and then the blade of grass began to wriggle and sway back and forth. Everyone watched as a three-colored flower bloomed at the tip of the blade, and a medicinal aroma filled the area.

"It really has three colors!"

"Fang Hao's skill with plants and vegetation is astonishing after all! He didn't just recognize that plant, he was able to judge its nature entirely!"

The surrounding crowds were in an uproar. The tier 1 alchemists were now looking at Meng Hao with complete and utter respect. In the Fang Clan's Dao of Alchemy Division, powerful alchemists were treated with fervor and veneration.

Fang Xuzhong's eyes widened, then he stared dead at Meng Hao, and a serious look spread out across his face. The Wind Spirit Grass might seem like an ordinary medicinal plant, but it was actually a line of demarcation when it came to determining skill with plants and vegetation. Even many tier 2 alchemists wouldn't know much about it. Even more shocking to him was how his opponent had identified how many colors the flower would bloom in. That was something that only tier 3 alchemists should be able to do.

"So, this guy has some skill after all," he thought. "It seems I need to take things a bit more seriously." Fang Xuzhong waved his hand to pull the Wind Spirit Grass back into his bag of holding, from which he then produced another medicinal plant.

This plant had more than one hundred leaves, which formed the shape of a triangle. The stamen of the plant's flowers were long and almost looked like tentacles as they drifted back and forth.

A single look at this medicinal plant, and it was clear that it was beyond ordinary. Everyone looking at it also felt a faint sense of danger.

"In order to avoid any accusations of bullying," said Fang Xuzhong, "I will not require you to explain the properties of this plant. Merely telling me its name will suffice." He stared icily at Meng Hao. Although he didn't say anything further, inside, he was laughing coldly. In his opinion, he had underestimated his opponent a bit when it came to the first medicinal plant. However, with this second one, he was completely confident that he could secure victory.

"When I first got this medicinal plant," he thought, "I didn't have any idea what it was. It was personally grown by one of the tier 5 alchemists, and I had to spend a small fortune to acquire it."

"It's completely one-of-a-kind. Not a single manual of plants and

vegetation will contain a description of it. It was grafted together from a variety of other medicinal plants, using the top-secret technique of a tier 5 alchemist.

"I simply can't believe that an inconsequential apprentice alchemist will be able to identify it!" Smiling coldly, Fan Xuzhong lifted his chin and stood there, hands clasped behind his back as he looked at Meng Hao.

He could visualize his opponent with tears streaming down his cheeks, racking his brains as he tried to identify the plant. He would probably spout a bunch of nonsense, for which Fan Xuzhong had already prepared appropriate words of response.

Everything was completely quiet. All eyes were focused on the medicinal plant. Because of the vague sense of danger it emanated, everyone was now paying close attention to it. Gradually, the medicinal aroma wafting out from the plant vitalized the minds of all present.

"What medicinal plant is that!?!?"

"I'm pretty sure I've never seen it before, although something about it seems familiar. How strange!"

Even the tier 1 alchemists were all frowning and trying desperately to recall what this plant was. Some people even pulled out jade slips containing information about plants and vegetation, which they began to search through for clues.

"That plant is even more mysterious than the Wind Spirit Grass from before!!" As the members of the audience began to speculate further about the plant, Meng Hao looked at it, and his eyes began to shine.

"I never imagined that the Fang Clan's Dao of Alchemy Division would be so skilled with plants and vegetation," he said. Immediately, the audience went silent, and everyone looked at Meng Hao.

Fang Xuzhong laughed coldly.

"Can you identify it, or not? There's no need to be deliberately cryptic."

Meng Hao chuckled in response.

"This medicinal plant is something I doubt you could grow," he said. When the onlookers heard this, they didn't think too much of it. However, Fang Xuzhong's heart began to thump.

"It has no name," Meng Hao continued slowly. "Or, perhaps you could say... the only person qualified to name it, is the alchemist who created it."

When Fan Xuzhong heard this, his face flickered. Meng Hao's two sentences were like lightning bolts striking his brain. How could he ever have imagined that his opponent would be able to pick up on the clues with just a glance? He quickly prepared to retrieve the plant and put it away, since Meng Hao's first two sentences had already revealed the truth regarding the name of the plant.

He recalled how the first time he had ever laid eyes on this plant years ago, he had stared in shock. To him, it had seemed like some strange and miraculous item. It wasn't until the tier 5 alchemist explained the plant to him that he understood the truth, and prostrated himself in admiration.

"Just how skilled is this Fang Hao?" he thought. "He actually recognized the plant! Dammit! No, I really have to pull a fast one!" Feeling more on guard than ever, he immediately had the urge to slander his opponent. However, in the Dao of Alchemy Division, reputation was extremely important, and with so many people looking on, word would spread quickly.

Fang Xuzhong gritted his teeth, and was just about to retrieve the medicinal plant and put it away when suddenly, Meng Hao started talking again.

"This is a medicinal plant produced by a grafting technique. Let me see.... It seems to be grafted from nineteen different medicinal plants. Those nineteen plants consist of Watershed Root, Spiritdream Grass, Mount Heaven Leaf, Mortality Bloom...." Meng Hao calmly listed all nineteen varieties of plants.

Fang Xuzhong's eyes widened, and he began to pant. He subconsciously staggered backward several steps, his expression one of disbelief. As for the next plant he had planned to pull out, Meng Hao had just mentioned it

in the list he had rattled off, so Fang Xuzhong had no choice but to abandon any idea of using it. How could he have ever imagined that this person could possibly...

Could possibly name all of the plants that made up the graft! Fang Xuzhong's mind was spinning. Of course, he couldn't be absolutely certain as to whether what Meng Hao had said was completely correct or not, because only the tier 5 alchemist who created it would be able to verify it.

After all, this was... a top secret technique!

Eventually Meng Hao reached his conclusion and said, "...afterwards, use the magic of the four seasons, invert Yin and Yang, graft three plants simultaneously. Combine all nineteen medicinal plants, do not allow them to be touched by the sun, allow the Yin qi to coalesce, which completes the process.

"Because this medical plant was created by grafting nineteen other plants together, if it is used in pill concocting, there are many possible transformations. An ordinary alchemist would probably be incapable of using it to concoct anything at all. Presumably, the alchemist who gave you this medicinal plant also gave you a pill formula specifically designed to be used with it.

"Tell me, Alchemist Fang, am I correct?" Meng Hao smiled and looked at Fang Xuzhong.

Meng Hao's words were followed by deathly silence. Everyone was looking at Fang Xuzhong, whose face flickered back and forth between various emotions. He felt like lightning was crashing around in his head, and without realizing it, he stepped backward. He was now looking at Meng Hao with wide eyes, as if he were some type of evil spirit.

# Chapter 906: The First Waves

“Impossible! This is Impossible!!” Fang Xuzhong’s heart trembled violently. He had no idea how the medicinal plant had been grafted together and no way of knowing whether Meng Hao was correct or not. However... based on his skill in the Dao of alchemy, he was fairly certain that what Meng Hao had said was true.

Most importantly, the tier 5 alchemist from whom he had acquired this medicinal plant had indeed given him a pill formula to use with it. Furthermore, the words that alchemist had used to describe the plant were exactly the same as the words Meng Hao had uttered just now!

“You....”

The surrounding apprentice alchemists noticed Fang Xuzhong’s pale face, the fact that he had backed up, and his facial expression. Virtually all of them understood exactly what it meant; Meng Hao had been completely correct in what he had said.

There was no other reason for Fang Xuzhong’s expression to change the way it had.

“Fang Hao was right again!!”

“Not even Alchemist Fang Xuzhong is capable of outdoing Fang Hao when it comes to plants and vegetation!!”

“It’s a good thing I kept good notes from when Fang Hao was lecturing about plants and vegetation earlier. I’m going to go back and review them thoroughly!”

The surrounding apprentice alchemists were abuzz. After all, as mere apprentice alchemists, they didn’t really understand much about alchemy. Even the tier 1 alchemists were panting and looking on with wide eyes. Then they exchanged glances, and saw similar looks of disbelief on each other’s faces.

They were alchemists, and though they might only be tier 1, their knowledge base far exceeded that of apprentice alchemists. Since they

couldn't identify the medicinal plant Fang Xuzhong held in his hand, they initially hadn't felt that there was anything special about it. However, after Meng Hao spoke, and especially after he revealed the grafting technique, their minds trembled.

"Uh... that grafting technique is a top secret method of a tier 5 alchemist!!"

"Nineteen medicinal plants! I'm afraid only a tier 5 alchemist could create something like that. But... but Fang Hao is so inhuman that he actually... easily identified the grafting method by simply looking at the plant!!"

"Just what is the full extent of his skill in plants and vegetation, and his Dao of alchemy? How frightening! It's almost like no secrets that relate to plants and vegetation can be kept from him!!"

Because of their advanced understanding, the tier 1 alchemists were thoroughly astonished.

Fang Xuzhong's face was pale white as he looked at Meng Hao, who in his view had become completely inscrutable and terrifying. He could never have predicted that anyone would be able, with a single look, to see through an alchemist's top secret technique and reveal the grafting method.

To him, such a thing was vastly terrifying.

As of this moment, he knew that he was absolutely no match for Fang Hao when it came to skill in plants and vegetation. He simply didn't stand a chance of winning when up against an inhuman like this in a competition.

"Damn you, Fang Yunyi!" he thought. "You just wait until I get back. I'll teach you a thing or two!" Fang Xuzhong was filled with bitterness, as well as a sudden, bone-deep hatred of Fang Yunyi. As for Meng Hao, he didn't dare to hate him.

Because the Dao of Alchemy Division had its own way of doing things, he could ignore the fact that Meng Hao was Chosen. However... after

getting a sense of Meng Hao's skill with plants and vegetation, he was frightened to death.

"With skill like that," he thought, "even if he's not very good at pill concocting, he'll still rise to complete prominence.... Furthermore, what if he's just as gifted in pill concocting? That would be petrifying. He'll certainly exceed me in the Dao of Alchemy Division. Now, thanks to Fang Yunyi, I've offended him. It definitely wasn't worth it...."

Fang Xuzhong took a deep breath, gritted his teeth, and was just about to admit defeat when suddenly his heart quivered. He suddenly realized that this defeat could actually be turned into an opportunity. He hesitated for a moment, then clasped hands and bowed to Meng Hao.

"Alchemist Fang, your skill in plants and vegetation is profound. I'm no match for you. I was crude and rash earlier, and I hope you can look past that. Please take the spirit stones in that bag of holding as my gift to you upon our first meeting. I admit defeat...." His words sent the apprentice alchemists into an uproar. However, the tier 1 alchemists had already surmised that he would take such action.

There would obviously be something wrong with any of them who would still feel confident enough to continue even when faced with someone so inhuman as to be able to identify a top secret grafting technique.

"However, I would also like to ask for some pointers, if that's okay. I... I saw a medicinal plant a while back. I've asked many people about it, but no one can tell me exactly what it was." Fang Xuzhong once again clasped hands and bowed. "Alchemist Fang, if you can help me out a bit, I'd be more than happy to give this grafted medicinal plant to you as an expression of my thanks."

Meng Hao's expression was as calm as ever. However, inwardly, he sighed, thinking that he should have acted a bit weaker earlier. Showing off so much had only deprived him of a chance to fleece this fat sheep.

"It's too bad," he thought. "I have a lot more spirit stones in my bag of holding, and I was planning to con this guy even harder. Now I've lost the chance." Feeling a bit depressed, he waved his hand to collect Fang

Xuzhong's bag of holding. After scanning it with divine sense and seeing how many spirit stones were inside, he felt a bit better.

Then he looked up at the grafted medicinal plant. He knew that the value of such a plant would be significant. Besides, the grafting techniques that had been used were intriguing. As a result, he nodded to Fang Xuzhong.

Fang Xuzhong's expression brightened, and he immediately produced a jade slip from his bag of holding, which he respectfully handed over to Meng Hao, who accepted it and scanned it with divine sense.

Immediately, an image of a violet flower appeared in his mind, growing on top of a tiny, hand-sized horse, which was galloping at top speed.

That was all he saw before the image vanished.

Meng Hao's expression became more serious, and he scanned the jade slip again. After a moment of thought, he asked, "Where did you see this?"

"On an island in a sea district here on Planet East Victory. I just randomly happened to see it, and chased after it for a while to no avail. I asked some of the local fisherman about it, and all of them reported seeing it before on occasion."

"However, even after returning to the location on a few times, I was never able to find it again." Fang Xuzhong had shown this jade slip to numerous alchemists, but none of them had ever been able to identify it. The best he had gotten were speculations that it was some type of rare medicinal plant.

"I think that horse is actually the root of the medicinal plant," said Fang Xuzhong.

"You would be wrong," said Meng Hao, shaking his head. "That's not a medicinal plant. It's... a medicinal pill! A sentient medicinal pill!"

"What?!?" exclaimed Fang Xuzhong, feeling both shock and disbelief. None of the numerous alchemists he had asked about this image had ever come to the conclusion that it was a medicinal pill. No matter how you looked at it, the only answer that made sense was that it was some kind of

medicinal plant.

"How is that even possible?" said Fang Xuzhong, mostly to himself. "Medicinal pills are medicinal pills! They're concocted by people! How could a medicinal pill come to life?"

"Such things do exist," said Meng Hao. "I've seen them." Without providing any further explanation, he handed the jade slip back to Fang Xuzhong, then clasped hands and bowed to the crowd. Finally, he turned and left.

Even after Meng Hao left, Fang Xuzhong was still in a state of disbelief. The surrounding apprentice alchemists all began disperse excitedly.

Soon after, Fang Xuzhong returned to his residence, whereupon he took out Fang Yunyi's jade slip and then grimly transmitted a stream of divine will into it.

Meanwhile, Fang Yunyi was in the ancestral mansion, meditating in his residence as he waited for news from the Dao of Alchemy Division.

"Alchemist Fang Xuzhong is a tier 2 alchemist. His skill in the Dao of alchemy is incredible. Once he shows up, that Meng Hao will definitely get put in his place. Forcing him to kneel there for three days will definitely lighten my heart a bit." He chuckled coldly, and he felt incredible anticipation for the moment when he could visit the Dao of Alchemy Division and personally look at Meng Hao kneeling there.

"Your dad was there on Planet South Heaven, and that's why you could be so arrogant and despotic. But here, you're an outsider. Let's see you try to be pompous here!" A wide smile appeared on his face. It was at this point that his expression flickered as he produced a jade slip from his bag of holding. Then he laughed out loud.

"Alchemist Fang sent me a message!" His expression one of anticipation, he sent his divine sense into the jade slip. After a moment, the jade slip began to glow, and an illusory version of Fang Xuzhong's face appeared. His expression was grim.

As soon as he saw Fang Xuzhong's expression, Fang Yunyi gaped in

shock. Before he could even say anything, Fang Xuzhong had already begun to speak.

“Fang Yunyi, what enmity is there between us?! You set me up, you bastard! You wanted me to humiliate Fang Hao? His skill in plants and vegetation is inhuman! Fang Yunyi, I’m not going to forget the trouble you’ve caused me!”

Fang Yunyi’s face fell.

“Alchemist Fang, this....”

“Don’t call me Alchemist Fang! From this day forth, when you want pills concocted, don’t come looking for me! Furthermore, none of my alchemist friends will concoct for you either!

“Fang Yunyi, what you’ve done is far too excessive!” Fang Xuzhong glared at Fang Yunyi for a moment, then gave a cold snort and severed the divine will connection.

Fang Yunyi’s face flickered with various emotions, and then suddenly, he shot to his feet and pulled out another jade slip, which he used to connect with the apprentice alchemist he had sent away earlier. After finding out what had happened between Meng Hao and Fang Xuzhong in the Dao of Alchemy Division, his face darkened. He wrathfully smashed the jade slip, and his face twisted with rage.

“Meng Hao!” he howled, and his hatred for Meng Hao grew even more intense.

In the Dao of Alchemy Division, everyone watched Meng Hao leave, and then dispersed. It didn’t take long before Meng Hao’s name began to be spread by all of the apprentice alchemists who had been present. The story of the bet between Meng Hao and Fang Xuzhong was especially popular.

When the apprentice alchemists from the outer mountains learned that Meng Hao had actually defeated Fang Xuzhong in terms of plants and vegetation, it only made Meng Hao all the more mysterious, and the subject of even more debate.

He had a 30,000 meter Bloodline Gatebeam, he had experienced the Seventh Year Tribulation, was the eldest grandson of the direct bloodline, and was a Chosen of the Fang Clan.

Word of all of these things spread, and soon, Meng Hao's name began to rise to prominence among the apprentice alchemists. There were even some low-level alchemists who took note.

In the ancestral mansion, Fang Wei's father and grandfather sat in a temple, their faces grim as they listened to a tier 1 alchemist retell the story of what had happened that day at the Dao of Alchemy Division.

After a long moment, the tier 1 alchemist left. Fang Wei's father, Fang Xiushan, looked incredibly gloomy.

"Dad, if that son of a bitch keeps doing things like this, it's going to cause waves of disturbance...."

"It doesn't matter," the old man said somberly. "He won't live much longer. Besides, even if he becomes famous in the Dao of Alchemy Division, the rules of the Fang Clan are clear; anyone who practices cultivation must contribute merit points."

"He just arrived, and will be provided with a set monthly allowance of merit points. It doesn't matter if it's in terms of cultivation or pill concocting, he won't be making any waves."

"Besides, if he wants to earn more merit points, he'll have to accomplish tasks set forth by the clan.... When that happens, it doesn't matter if he's avoided death so far, he'll be on the outside, where accidents can happen at any time."

# Chapter 907: I Definitely Don't Want It!

Meng Hao had returned to his Immortal's cave residence. He already had some idea as to what would be happening right now back in the Dao of Alchemy Division, and some of those things were exactly what he wanted.

"My cultivation base isn't good enough to help me rise to prominence in the Fang Clan, but since they have their own Dao of alchemy, why not rise to prominence there? That can make me just as popular and famous.

"The higher my status in their Dao of Alchemy Division, then the higher my status will be in the clan in general.

"The Dao of alchemy.... If I could become the most powerful alchemist in the Fang Clan, then I would definitely be super famous. When I control the entire Dao of Alchemy Division, then finding out what happened to my two Nirvana Fruits won't be very difficult!" His eyes gleamed, and a cold smile appeared on his face.

After a moment, Meng Hao closed his eyes and rotated his cultivation base, as well as his Immortal meridian. The portion of it which remained illusory was slowly becoming solid.

"I still need more time before my Immortal meridian is full and complete. When that happens, I'll be a true Immortal!" He took a deep breath. Outside, it was gradually growing dark, and the moon had risen. Meng Hao's eyes finally opened, and he waved his hand, causing the ten sets of ingredients for Spirit Elixir to emerge.

Meng Hao looked them over carefully, then examined the formula for a while.

"This formula is pretty simple," he thought. "Also, the Spirit Elixir it produces won't be very high quality." Eyes glittering, he produced the jade box and took out the Nirvana Fruits. After examining them for a bit, he tried his hand at concocting the Spirit Elixir.

First, he made one batch using the method described in the formula. To

Meng Hao, that method was simply too basic. After concocting the first batch, he decided to use his own method. He altered the formula a bit, then produced a total of nine batches of Spirit Elixir, each one slightly different than the others.

Then, he carefully dripped them onto one of the Nirvana Fruits one batch at a time, and observed the various reactions.

He was immediately able to see signs of restoration on the fruit. By the time the ninth batch of Spirit Elixir had been absorbed, the Nirvana fruit was no longer cracked and wrinkled, and in fact looked wholly recovered. It even emanated a splendorous light that strongly stimulated the blood in Meng Hao's veins.

He even had the mistaken feeling that he should immediately absorb the Nirvana Fruit into his body. He quickly closed his eyes and suppressed the impulse to try it out. After four hours, the Nirvana Fruit slowly began to wither back up. By the time six hours had passed, it had returned to its original dried-up shape.

"If I had actually tried to absorb it," he murmured, looking at the withered fruits, "then I would have been turned into a desiccated corpse just now. A sudden and unexpected death."

"If I want to absorb these Nirvana Fruits, then I need to truly restore them so that they aren't dangerous. Of these nine batches of Spirit Extract, the seventh was the strongest. It was around twice as strong as any of the others." He looked down at the final remaining set of ingredients. After a moment of hesitation, a gleam of determination appeared in his eyes.

"This formula still isn't good enough. The medicinal plants used to concoct the Spirit Elixir can actually be substituted with other medicinal plants." Meng Hao sank into contemplation regarding the combination of medicinal plants. After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, he gritted his teeth and pulled out a Sun Blossom and a Reincarnation Leaf, legendary medicinal plants that were extinct in the outside world. After adding them to the formula, he began to concoct more Spirit Elixir.

This time, it took him two full days to complete the concoction. When

the medicinal plants were finally refined into a liquid, he ended up with a glob of emerald-green fluid about the size of a fist, which he then placed into a small bottle.

It was filled with dense Immortal qi, and because it contained Sun Blossom and Reincarnation Leaf, it meant that this bottle was shocking in terms of both quality and value.

Enduring the pain in his heart, Meng Hao produced the copper mirror and duplicated it, then very carefully poured a single drop from the bottle onto one of the Nirvana Fruits. It instantly returned to life, and began to glow with scintillating light.

However, Meng Hao knew that the fruit had not truly recovered. He continued to pour one drop after another onto the fruit, a total of one hundred. When the liquid was completely absorbed by the Nirvana Fruit, it gradually began to transform. Although it was difficult to describe the exact nature of the transformation, Meng Hao was just barely able to detect some sort of life force from within.

"It's working!" he thought, his eyes flickering. However, his heart then began to twinge with pain. Duplicating that single bottle of Spirit Elixir had removed a distressing amount of spirit stones from his bag of holding.

He clenched his jaw.

"It's just a bit of money, right...?" he said through gritted teeth, and then duplicated another bottle. Time passed. Five days.

"Dammit! Do you absorb Spirit Elixir or spirit stones!?!?

"Y-y-you're... you're still absorbing the Spirit Elixir!?!?

"It-it... it's like I've fallen into a bottomless pit!!

"Argh, my spirit stones!!"

Meng Hao's eyes were bloodshot as he stared at the Nirvana Fruit. During these five days, he had depleted the number of spirit stones in his bag of holding by half. He had duplicated an ocean of Spirit Elixir, all of which had been absorbed by the Nirvana Fruit. The life force inside of it

was growing stronger, but there seemed to be no end in sight. Meng Hao could clearly sense that it was thirsty to absorb more Spirit Elixir.

If you calculated exactly how much Spirit Elixir the Nirvana Fruit had absorbed, anyone in the Fang Clan would have been shocked. Furthermore, that Spirit Elixir was of the finest quality. A few bottles might not have been a big deal, but for most people, it wouldn't just be a problem of spirit stones; they simply would never be able to gather that many medicinal plants. Especially not the Sun Blossoms and Reincarnation Leaves.

"Only when it reaches the point that it can't absorb any more Spirit Elixir, will I know that it's fully restored!" Meng Hao's heart dripped with blood, and he ceased duplicating the Spirit Elixir. He quickly packed the Nirvana Fruit up and then closed his eyes.

After a moment, he opened his eyes again and then frowned.

"This isn't the right method. I need to increase the Spirit Elixir's power. To do that, I need to replace all of the current medicinal plant ingredients. If I can create an even more powerful Spirit Elixir, that would be the best thing. Although it might cost more spirit stones to duplicate on an individual basis, overall, I'll be able to save a lot of resources."

Meng Hao took a deep breath and then rose to his feet, ending the current madness of duplication and concoction. He was now preparing to make another trip to the Dao of Alchemy Division, and figure out a way to get the medicinal plants he needed.

"Unfortunately, I don't have the clan merit points I need.... However, that problem is solved easily enough." Eyes shining brightly, he turned into a beam of light that shot toward the Dao of Alchemy Division.

People recognized him almost as soon as he arrived. That was especially true when he reached Alchemy Lodge Peak #7191. The apprentice alchemists there, including the old alchemist Fang Qun, immediately rose to their feet excitedly, clasped hands, and invited him onto the platform.

Meng Hao didn't decline, but instead took his place and began to lecture about the Dao of alchemy, and even asked the apprentice alchemists to go

invite others to come listen.

"All of this is for the clan," Meng Hao announced in a profound voice. "I hope that, even with my meager skills, I can help to advance our clan's Dao of alchemy." His voice seemed to be full of loyalty and righteousness toward the clan.

The apprentice alchemists were getting excited, and immediately took out jade slips to inform their friends, who quickly hurried over, and also spread the word.

Over the course of the following four hours, the mountain peak came to be surrounded by tens of thousands of onlookers, who packed together to listen to Meng Hao lecture about plants and vegetation. Many among the audience were people who had heard of the events that had previously occurred, and were skeptically listening to Meng Hao for the first time. However, after listening for only a short time, their eyes went wide, and they were quickly absorbed in the information, seemingly entranced.

Meng Hao lectured for an entire day, after which he started to look a bit tired.

"Ladies and Gentlemen of the clan, it's not that I don't wish to continue, but I really don't have enough time. I have to go do some tasks for the clan. Next time I'm free, I'll be sure to come back."

No matter what the crowd said to try to get him to stay, Meng Hao refused, and immediately left the Dao of Alchemy Division.

Later, for no apparent reason, Fang Xi suddenly became interested in the Dao of alchemy. He pulled some strings to get a chance to become an apprentice alchemist, and went directly to Peak #7191, quickly becoming familiar with some of the apprentice alchemists there.

In the following days, whenever Meng Hao returned, Fang Xi was in the crowd. Every time Meng Hao showed up, it was evening, and he would only talk for four hours before leaving.

Of course, each and every time, he would stop right at a critical moment in the lecture, which made the apprentice alchemists even more excited to

hear what was next. He would always appear to really wish to keep lecturing, but be unable to because of Clan assignments, and would leave.

On one particular occasion, he lectured for about six hours before preparing to leave. It was at this point that one of the apprentice alchemists called out in a loud voice.

“Fang Hao, isn’t the point of performing clan assignments to get merit points? How about I give one of my merit points to you, and you keep talking for two hours! What do you think?!” This apprentice alchemist was none other than Fang Xi. From the look on his face, he was prepared to go all out, to pay any price necessary to gain more knowledge of plants and vegetation.

As soon as the words left his mouth, the surrounding apprentice alchemists hesitated for a moment. However, there were a few others who immediately voiced their approval, calling out to Meng Hao, who stopped in his tracks.

“Oh, I don’t think that’s a good idea....” he said hesitantly.

“What’s not good about it!?” hollered Fang Xi at the top of his lungs. “Fang Hao, your skill in plants and vegetation is so high that even a tier 2 alchemist is no match for you! If you’re willing to sacrifice your own merit points for the clan, and for us, then we’re willing to do the same thing for you! If we weren’t, it would be a huge shame for us!”

Other apprentice alchemists began to chime in.

“That’s right! Fang Hao, during these days, we’ve personally witnessed the sacrifices you have been making for the sect, and for us. We’re all very grateful....”

“Fang Hao, you’re a Chosen, and yet, you’re not arrogant at all! No matter what questions we come up with about plants and vegetation, you patiently answer them all! You deserve to get merit points from us!”

“That’s right! Anyone who refuses to part with their merit points should just get the hell out of here! The most valuable thing in the world isn’t bullying other people! It’s knowledge!!”

As the atmosphere in the area grew more passionate, Meng Hao's face filled with emotion. Finally, he took a deep breath and stood tall on the platform, nodding his head.

"Very well," he said, sounding determined. "Thank you for your support, everyone. Since all of you demand this, then I will forgo any service to the clan, and will instead personally impart all of my knowledge of plants and vegetation to all of you!"

"For two hours, I'll charge only one merit point per person! Don't offer any more! If you do, I won't accept!"

The surrounding apprentice alchemists all had strange looks on their faces. Some were actually looks of disdain; how could people not have at least some idea of what had just happened?

# Chapter 908: Medicine Pavilion

Immediately, conversations rippled through the crowd.

“He’s actually charging a fee!!”

“Doggone-it! How shameless! How fake!”

“Let’s go to some other peak. None of the other alchemists charge merit points!”

Almost immediately, tens of thousands of apprentice alchemists flicked their sleeves and left. Meng Hao watched them leave and sighed.

“These Fang Clan people are so stingy,” he thought. “There were so many people before, but as soon as I mentioned charging merit points, so many of them just got up and left....”

In the end, only about a thousand people remained behind. To them, one merit point wasn’t very much; considering it was Meng Hao who was lecturing, they felt it was worth it.

This time, Meng Hao lectured for six hours, after which, he collected several thousand merit points, then left the Dao of Alchemy Division and returned to his Immortal’s cave. A few hours later, Fang Xi returned, looking both excited and cautious at the same time. The parrot perched on one of his shoulders, the meat jelly on the other. He looked very proud of himself.

“Coz! We really made a profit this time!”

Meng Hao laughed, and his eyes glowed with bright light. In the Fang Clan, merit points were essentially the same thing as spirit stones, or even Immortal jades. Anything you wanted required an exchange of merit points.

Meng Hao waved his sleeve, producing a jade medallion. After scanning it with divine sense, he partitioned a hundred merit points and transferred them to Fang Xi.

“We need to make sure the apprentice alchemists you hired don’t get

discouraged. Tell them that the better they do in promoting me, the more merit points they can earn.”

Fang Xi was actually quite excited. He had never before thought of using such a method to earn merit points. Normally speaking, the most he could ever get in a one-month period was about five hundred. But just now, it only took about six hours to make several thousand. To him, it made Meng Hao even more enigmatic than before.

It was at this point that Fang Xi said, “Coz, I promised them ten points apiece....”

“Don’t be stingy, Fang Xi,” Meng Hao replied, sounding very solemn. “Look, don’t take this the wrong way, but you’re simply too stingy. You need to think big! It’s just a bit of money, right?! If cultivators like us are constantly thinking about material things, then how can we ever increase our cultivation base?”

Fang Xi gaped for a moment in hesitation, but couldn’t hold back from carefully saying, “Coz, what I mean is... you didn’t give enough. I promised them ten per person, and I hired 173 people....”

Meng Hao’s face immediately flickered, and he said nothing for a moment.

His silence caused Fang Xi to immediately get nervous, and he quickly continued, “Coz, I know I messed up. Next time I hire them, I’ll tell them it’ll be fifty per person.”

Meng Hao’s cheek suddenly twitched. Taking a deep breath, he looked at Fang Xi and sincerely said, “Fang Xi, listen. You haven’t lived the hard life, so you don’t know how difficult things can be. Do you know what cultivators like us use up the most? Resources! Spirit Stones! Immortal jades!

“If you want to be stronger than everyone else, then you need more spirit stones! More resources! That’s the path to power!

“Now, don’t take this the wrong way, but you need to learn how to work hard and live a simple life! Be diligent, thrifty! Learn how to take only one

merit point, and split it ten ways! That's how cultivators like us can reach the top and stay there!" Meng Hao patted Fang Xi's shoulder. Suppressing the inward pain he felt, he took out his command medallion and once again sent his divine sense out, causing a thousand merit points to transfer over.

"Remember what I just told you," Meng Hao urged. "One merit point, split ten ways.... You can't just throw your money away!"

Fang Xi gaped at Meng Hao in utter shock. The words he had spoken just now were the complete opposite of what he had said before. And yet, both made sense.

In the end, Meng Hao couldn't hold back from adding, "Next time you hire people, it's one merit point per person. That should be enough."

Sighing, he turned and headed into his residence.

Of the more than three thousand merit points he had started out with, he now had less than half left. It was quite a blow.

Add to that the fact that later that night, Meng Hao had to duplicate more Spirit Elixir to use on the Nirvana Fruit, and the result was that by the following day, his bag of holding once again seemed sadly shrunken. By that time, Meng Hao truly felt as if he were about to go crazy.

He loved spirit stones, and loved being wealthy. Furthermore, what he loved least was spending his spirit stones....

To him, it felt like draining out his own blood.

At dawn, Meng Hao emerged. When Fang Xi saw him, he stared in shock.

"Coz, what's wrong?" he asked, concerned.

Meng Hao's eyes were completely red, and his expression had become somewhat vicious. He took a deep breath and cleared his head. Deep within his eyes, a brilliant light flickered.

"I HAVE to get rich! I HAVE to get merit points!!"

Meng Hao returned to the Dao of Alchemy Division, and to Peak #7191.

Yet again, he lectured about plants and vegetation. However, this time, there were actually fewer people than last time, only about nine hundred.

There wasn't much he could do. In order to get as many merit points as possible, he lectured for an entire day before leaving in exhaustion.

Each time he came after that, there were fewer people. After about a month, there were just over four hundred people who came, causing Meng Hao to sigh. The ones that stayed behind were the original group of apprentice alchemists, the ones whose fervor toward Meng Hao was the most intense.

Among their number was also tier 1 alchemist Fang Qun, who fairly worshipped Meng Hao.

After finishing his lecture, Meng Hao didn't leave. Instead, he went to Fang Qun's Immortal's cave and directly asked some questions.

"Fang Qun, in the Fang Clan's Dao of alchemy division, how do apprentice alchemists get promoted to full alchemist?"

Fang Qun always treated Meng Hao very respectfully. Despite his surprise about the question, he quickly answered.

"To become a full alchemist, you have to concoct at least a thousand tier 1 medicinal pills, and must also pass through the first level of the Medicine Pavilion.

"The first thing to do is pass through the Medicine Pavilion. That indicates that your skill with plants and vegetation has reached the level of a tier 1 alchemist.

"Unfortunately, it's very difficult. Anyone in the Dao of Alchemy Division who hasn't studied plants and vegetation for at least ten years would have a very hard time passing the first level. Take me, for example. I can concoct tier 2 medicinal pills, although my success rate isn't very high. However, despite my best efforts, I barely passed the examination of the Medicine Pavilion. Due to my lack of skill in plants and vegetation, I wasn't able to get past the second level, and in the end, I became a tier 1 alchemist." Fang Qun chuckled bitterly.

“Medicine Pavilion?” asked Meng Hao, his eyes sparkling. “How do you get into it?”

“It doesn’t matter if you’re a full alchemist or an apprentice alchemist, anyone can enter the pavilion at any time. The Medicine Pavilion was set up in the past by a Patriarch of the Dao of Alchemy Division. It tests everything that you can think of, and has nine levels, which corresponds to the nine tiers for alchemists.

“Anyone who feels confident enough, can pay one hundred merit points to go to the inner mountains and take the Medicine Pavilion trial by fire.

“It’s extremely hard,” said Fang Qun, lowering his voice. “Of all the apprentice alchemists from Peak #7191, only about seven or eight might be able to attempt it, and that would only be after another ten or more years of study. As for the rest, most would need dozens of years of study before they could even think about trying. If you were to try to brute-force imprint your memory with knowledge, your mental world would burst from being overwhelmed by the infinite possible varieties of plants and vegetation. Unless your cultivation base is at an unfathomable level, of course.”

Meng Hao knew that when it came to plants and vegetation, there were endless variations, which were hard to imprint with spiritual sense. After hearing Fang Qun’s explanation, Meng Hao began to mutter to himself. Then, a plan started to form in his mind.

“Is there any other way to become a full alchemist?” Meng Hao asked.

“Other ways...?” Fang Qun thought for a moment, and then his eyes brightened. However, they grew dull again just as quickly. “There is, but it’s too difficult. In fact, it’s impossible to succeed that way.

“For tens of thousands of years, there have been three specific medicinal pills in the Dao of Alchemy Division which, if any full alchemist or apprentice alchemist can concoct, will allow them to immediately be promoted to tier 8 alchemist. That person would instantly become famous in the entire clan.

“Those three pills are famous pills concocted by past Patriarchs.

Unfortunately, even though they left pill formulas behind after they perished, no one has been able to successfully concoct them.

“In all of Planet East Victory, even the Medicine Immortal Sect is only capable of concocting two of those pills. Of course, even though the Medicine Immortal Sect has its roots in the Fang Clan, and might even be considered a branch of the sect and a part of our Dao of alchemy, they are still almost considered outsiders. The fact that they can concoct pills that we cannot is somewhat disgraceful.

“That’s why those three pill formulas were placed in the Pill Pavilion. The clan has posted incredible rewards for concocting them. Supposedly, the reward for even the most simple of the three includes Immortal jade, tons of spirit stones, and 5,000,000 merit points, not to mention vast quantities of medicinal plants, magical items, and technique manuals.

“Unfortunately, after all these tens of thousands of years, nobody has ever succeeded. Even our only tier 9 alchemist, Pill Elder Fang Danyun, had to admit that he can’t concoct them.” 1

Fang Qun shook his head.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered and then almost seemed to glaze over.

“Another thing: because the cost of the medicinal plant ingredients is so high, anyone who attempts to concoct the simplest of those pills is must put up 1,000,000 merit points as a collateral. Regardless of whether they succeed or fail, the merit points will be erased.”

When Meng Hao heard that, he felt like someone had grabbed him by the neck and started squeezing down tightly. It took him a long moment before he could breathe again.

“Merit points! Merit points again!!” He suddenly frowned, and pushed down the impulsive feelings rising up in his heart. After spending a bit of time planning, his eyes began to glitter.

“Take me to the Medicine Pavilion!” he suddenly said.

“You... you want to try to challenge the Medicine Pavilion!?” asked Fang Qun, looking shocked. Then, he suddenly looked excited. He was well

aware that he had no idea as to the limits of Meng Hao's skill in plants and vegetation.

"Try to challenge the Medicine Pavilion?" Meng Hao replied, sounding surprised. "What, are you going to pay for it? Nah, I'm not going to try to challenge it, I'm just going to take a look at the first level." With that, Meng Hao flew out of the Immortal's cave.

"Uh... no, I'm not going to pay for it...." Fang Qun hurried to follow as Meng Hao shot through the mountains.

Soon, two mountain peaks appeared ahead of Meng Hao, between which was an enormous treasure pavilion, floating there in mid air, emanating brilliant and colorful light. Clouds and mist floated around it, and it truly looked like an abode of Immortals.

Two old men sat cross-legged outside of the treasure pavilion, next to an enormous stone slab.

"This is the Medicine Pavilion," Fang Qun said softly, a pious look in his eyes. "According to the stories, this pavilion is actually a magical item, a precious treasure that the first generation Patriarch brought from off planet. It was originally owned by someone else, and had always attempted to fly away to rejoin him. However, after the Patriarch passed away in meditation, it has remained locked in place here, floating in midair and unable to go anywhere."

Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and he flew up into the air directly toward the Medicine Pavilion. As soon as he got close, an incredibly powerful medicinal aroma hit him in the face. In the blink of an eye, he sensed millions upon millions of different types of medicinal aromas all mixed together.

"So many types of plants and vegetation!" thought Meng Hao with a gasp. He was still outside, and yet could already tell how terrifying it must be inside.

As he neared, the two old men who acted as guards outside the Medicine Pavilion opened their eyes. They appeared to be incredibly ancient, as if they were Immortal Divinities with unfathomable cultivation bases. From

what he could tell, they were even more powerful than the Grand Elder.

His face solemn, he clasped hands and bowed.

The two old men looked over Meng Hao, and it almost seemed as if they could see through him. Finally, they retracted their gazes and closed their eyes. Meng Hao took a deep breath and then looked at the huge stone stele that rested off to the side.

The stone stele was divided into nine levels, upon each of which were written names. The first level had the most names, hundreds of thousands of them. After the first level, the higher you went, the fewer names there were, and some of the names were gray-colored. On the ninth level, there were ten names, with nine being gray, and one shining brightly.

Fang Danyun!

\*

1. Fang Danyun's name in Chinese is 方丹云 fāng dān yún. Dan means 'pill.' Yun means 'cloud'.

# Chapter 909: Cheating!

In the Fang Clan's Dao of Alchemy Division, there was currently only one tier 9 alchemist, the man known as Pill Elder... Fang Danyun.

Meng Hao looked at the ten names on the ninth level of the stone stele, and suddenly thought of his master Pill Demon.

"From my current perspective, it's now obvious that Pill Demon's skill in the Dao of alchemy vastly exceeded any standards for Planet South Heaven. Were it not for the fact that he lacked certain medicinal plant ingredients, he would surely have been able to concoct some medicinal pills that were famous in all the Ninth Mountain and Sea."

"Now, he's a member of the Kunlun Society, with even more resources at his disposal and able to focus completely on the Dao of alchemy." When Meng Hao thought of his master, he couldn't help... but also think of a certain woman. It was Chu Yuyan, who had left with Pill Demon to go to the Kunlun Society.

"Waiting to meet out in the big wide world... is a beautiful type of regret." Meng Hao shook his head. To him, emotions were not everything. In this life, it was enough for him to have only Xu Qing.

Even more important was to accomplish something incredible, all on his own.

"I'm going to become the richest person in all the Ninth Mountain and Sea!" he thought, his eyes filling with determination as he strode into the Medicine Pavilion.

As soon as he entered, a gentle light swept over him, and his identity jade medallion flew out. Glittering light could be seen as one hundred clan merit points were deducted from within.

Meng Hao's heart twinged in pain. Those one hundred merit points represented lecturing to a hundred apprentice alchemists for two hours.

"No pain, no gain!" he thought. "I'm going to go for it!" Gritting his teeth, he continued onward into the Medicine Pavilion. Suddenly, he found

himself surrounded by thick mists that made it difficult to see.

After a moment, a glowing light appeared in front of him, within which were 1,000 types of medicinal plants. It was hard to see them clearly, as they were obscured by mist. Simultaneously, an archaic voice echoed throughout the first level.

“One hundred breaths of time. Identify at least 900 medicine plants and imprint them with divine sense. You will be given ten sets; completing nine of them will count as passing the level.”

As soon as the voice finished speaking, the mists covering the 1,000 medicinal plants vanished, leaving them clearly visible. Meng Hao’s gaze passed over them, and he immediately recognized all of them. However, he did not imprint any of them with divine sense, but instead committed all 1,000 plants to memory.

One hundred breaths of time quickly passed, and the light flickered. The 1,000 medicinal plants vanished, to be replaced by another set of 1,000.

Meng Hao quickly looked them over, and his eyes sparkled as if with electricity. After committing the medicinal plants to memory, he waited for the hundred breaths of time to end, and the third set of 1,000 medicinal plants to appear.

In this manner, he consumed all ten opportunities that he was given. After being shown 10,000 medicinal plants, he was wrapped up by a gentle force, and, in the blink of an eye, sent flying out of the first level of the Medicine Pavilion, to appear outside.

Fang Qun was waiting outside, filled with anticipation. As soon as he saw Meng Hao appear, his jaw dropped. Whenever anybody passed the first level, glowing lights would appear. And yet, the first level looked exactly the same as when Meng Hao had entered it.

Fang Qun gaped in shock, and was about to step forward when Meng Hao suddenly strode directly back toward the entrance, paid his one hundred merit points, and entered the Medicine Pavilion again.

Inside, he once again memorized the 10,000 medicinal plants that were

shown to him, and was expelled. Gritting his teeth, he went in again.

Twice, three times, four times.... In a relatively short period of time, Meng Hao entered ten times. His merit points were vanishing rapidly. However, he stuck with it. Fang Qun was struck dumb, and could scarcely believe that Meng Hao couldn't pass the first level of the Medicine Pavilion. And yet, here he was watching the bizarre scene play out right in front of him.

"What exactly is he doing?" thought Fang Qun. In his estimation, it should be a relatively simple matter for Meng Hao to pass the first level of the Medicine Pavilion. He just couldn't figure out why he would want to go in at the same level over and over again.

Time passed. Meng Hao, seemingly bewitched, tried out the first level ten times, twenty times, thirty times. In the end... he entered the first level a hundred times.

That was 10,000 merit points, and considering he hadn't even earned 20,000 merit points over the last month or so, that meant he had now depleted his supply by more than sixty percent.

"100 times!" he said after appearing outside. He looked over at the Medicine Pavilion and took a deep breath.

After taking the examination over 100 times, he had been shown 1,000,000 medicinal plants. However, many of those were actually duplicates. After some thought, he looked at the more than 4,000 merit points he had left, gritted his teeth, and entered the Medicine Pavilion yet again.

After passing through 40 more times, Meng Hao had less than a hundred merit points left. The two old men sitting outside the Medicine Pavilion watched his odd behavior with fascination. They could clearly sense the determination that filled him.

"140 times! You would think that 1,400,000 medicinal plants would appear. But in reality, when you eliminate the repetitions, there were only about 1,000,000.

"From all those 1,000,000 medicinal plants, each section of the test only selects 1,000. All you need to do is recognize 900, and then, do that nine times.... In other words, in any given test, you actually only have to identify about 8,100 medicinal plants correctly!"

"When you think about it that way, it's not really that hard." Meng Hao mused thoughtfully. In particular, there were about 5,000 medicinal plants that recurred most often in the test, which had special significance. These were plants that were easily confused with others.

Eyes glittering, he turned and left, followed by Fang Qun. Fang Qun wanted to ask some questions, but after seeing Meng Hao's thoughtful look, he hesitated, and then decided not to interrupt.

Evening was falling, but Meng Hao did not return to his Immortal's cave. Instead, he accepted Fang Qun's invitation to stay at his Immortal's cave for the night. During that time, he did not practice cultivation, but instead took out a jade slip and began to analyze and record information from his 140 examinations in the Medicine Pavilion, and to gather together information about the most common medicinal plants to appear.

Day and night, he classified and categorized the different plants. Three days later, he emerged, his expression one of exhaustion, and yet with brightly gleaming eyes.

"Measly Medicine Pavilion," he thought. "I'm going to help all of the apprentice alchemists who listen to my lectures pass the first level of the Medicine Pavilion. When that happens, there will definitely be a huge increase in my audience." He laughed heartily, and his eyes shone with anticipation and determination. To do something like he was doing was something no other alchemist would ever think was possible.

The reason Meng Hao could do it was because his skill in plants and vegetation had reached a completely terrifying level. Because of that, he was capable of memorizing and then organizing all of those 1,000,000 medicinal plants.

Of course, other high level alchemists might be able to do the same thing. However, they would never think to use the same method, to waste

such energy and such a large amount of merit points, to organize all that information for the purpose of cheating.

After spending a few more days organizing all of the information and data, Meng Hao was completely confident. The next time he went to lecture the more than 400 fanatical apprentice alchemists, all the content was regarding information about those specific medicinal plants.

He especially focused on the most common plants, as well as the ones that were most easily misidentified.

This was a method that focused specifically on memorizing correct answers. Meng Hao completely forgot any exhaustion he felt, and committed himself to lecturing. A month later, the number of apprentice alchemists didn't increase, but neither did it decrease.

By the time that month ended, Meng Hao had finished introducing all of the plants that most commonly appeared in the Medicine Pavilion test. After finishing a lecture, he would wave his hand, and use the magic of a divine ability to cause 1,000 medicinal plants to appear.

"Next, I'll give you a little test," he said. "I'll give you two hours to try to identify as many of these 1,000 medicinal plants as possible. Mark down any that you don't know. When the time limit is up, I'll give you the correct answers."

This was a completely fresh and new experience for these apprentice alchemists, but as for Fang Qun, he looked on with wide eyes. After listening to Meng Hao's lectures for a month, he was starting to feel a bit apprehensive. After all, he had passed through the first level of the Medicine Pavilion, and was starting to pick up on what Meng Hao was doing. This was especially the case when Meng Hao started using the same testing method as the first level of the Medicine Pavilion. It was at this point that he started panting, and a look of astonishment could be seen on his face.

"Don't tell me... he actually went through the first level of the Medicine pavilion more than a hundred times just to be able to see all the test's contents!"

"That's... that's basically the same as just seeing all the answers! Now that he's giving specific lectures about the answers, these apprentice alchemists will have a much, much higher chance of passing the examination. That's... that's cheating!"

"It's even more so the case considering he's using the same testing method as the Medicine Pavilion, just to get them used to it...." Fang Qun couldn't help but gape in shock.

Two hours later, the images vanished, and the apprentice alchemists began to ask questions about the medicinal plants they couldn't identify. Meng Hao emphasized various key points, and then waved his hand again, causing another set of images to appear.

It was in this fashion that time slowly passed. Meng Hao rarely returned to his Immortal's cave. Most of his time was spent in the Dao of Alchemy Division. Eventually, he reduced the amount of time he gave the apprentice alchemists from two hours to one hour. Then to the time it takes an incense stick to burn. Then half that amount of time.

By the time another month had passed, Meng Hao had reduced the time limit to one hundred breaths.

His audience gradually got used to it, and eventually started to get excited about the continually increasing number of medicinal plants they could identify, and the continuously increasing speed at which they could identify them. Actually, it was virtually impossible for them NOT to identify the medicinal plants, because during that time, Meng Hao lectured exclusively on the contents of the Medicine Pavilion examination.

During that three month period, the apprentice alchemists gave most of their merit points to Meng Hao. In exchange, there were more than a hundred among the group who had reached the point of being able to identify more than 900 medicinal plants in one hundred breaths of time.

On that day, Meng Hao ceased lecturing. Instead, he looked seriously at all of the four hundred members of his audience.

"Your merit points have not been spent in vain," he announced. "Right now, all of us are going to the Medicine Pavilion to participate in the first

level examination. Trust me, at least twenty percent of you will definitely pass!" In response, the apprentice alchemists looked at him with shock and hesitation.

"Fang Qun, lead the way!" said Meng Hao, waving his hand. Fang Qun gritted his teeth, nodded, and walked forward. The four hundred unconfident apprentice alchemists then followed his lead to the Medicine Pavilion.

Meng Hao flew along with them.

Along the way, more than few people noticed what was going on, and when they heard that the group was going to the Medicine Pavilion to take the examination, they began to laugh out loud.

"How long have they been studying? And they think they can take on the first level of the Medicine Pavilion?"

"Without studying about plants and vegetation for dozens of years, how could you possibly succeed in the Medicine Pavilion? Do you people want to just throw away their merit points or something?"

"That's funny. A lot of them have barely studied plants and vegetation for three years, right?"

More and more apprentice alchemists took note. All of them wondered what the reason was for all of this, and they began to laugh and ridicule them.

# Chapter 910: Rocking the Pavilion

The ridicule caused many of the four hundred apprentice alchemists to feel very embarrassed, and even hesitant. They weren't confident in their chances of success at all, but Meng Hao was very enthusiastic about the whole matter. Were it anyone else, they would think they were intentionally being set up to look bad.

"Ignore all of them! Trust me!" cried Meng Hao, his expression solemn. The four hundred apprentice alchemists gritted their teeth.

They still weren't confident, and yet, were still interested in knowing how far away they were from being able to succeed in the first level of the Medicine Pavilion.

The sound of the onlookers' mockery rang out, and there were quite a few people who decided to follow along to see what happened when the group tried to pass the examination in the Medicine Pavilion. There were some tier 1 alchemists who recognized Fang Qun and, when they saw what was going on, shook their heads.

"Fang Qun is really too shortsighted. Those are apprentice alchemists from Peak #7191, right?"

"Although it's true that an alchemist lecturer will receive a reward if any apprentice alchemist from their peak passes the first level of the Medicine Pavilion, these people only have a few years of experience with the Dao of alchemy; they definitely have no chance of succeeding."

"I heard that Fang Hao took over for Fang Qun over the past few months to give lectures at Peak #7191. He even started charging merit point fees. What a joke."

Surrounded by laughter and ridicule, Fang Qun and the four hundred apprentice alchemists slowly passed into the inner mountains and then appeared in front of the Medicine Pavilion. Although some of the alchemists in the inner mountains noticed them passing by, none took an interest.

Granted, there were four hundred people all going to take the test together, but that wasn't something unheard of. After all, there were many, many people who were members of the Dao of Alchemy Division. Furthermore, the Medicine Pavilion was a mysterious place; entrance was not limited to a single person. Even 10,000 could enter at one time if they wished.

The interior of the pavilion would appear empty to each participant, as if they were taking the test alone.

The four hundred apprentice alchemists gritted their teeth, paid their merit points, and were about to step into the Medicine Pavilion when Meng Hao took a deep breath and called out.

"All of you, remember, just do things the way you normally do, and you won't have any problems!"

The four hundred apprentice alchemists gave nervous, forced smiles to Meng Hao as they clasped hands and bowed to him. Then, clenching their jaws, they entered the Medicine Pavilion one after another. In the blink of an eye, four hundred people vanished.

By this point, a few thousand people had gathered to watch, and were all laughing and joking.

Fang Qun was extremely nervous. Many of the people who had gathered were familiar with him, and he could clearly hear their jokes, but there was nothing he could say in response.

Meng Hao's expression was calm as he floated there in midair looking at the Medicine Pavilion.

Meanwhile, inside, the four hundred apprentice alchemists inside all faced empty mists. Then, 1,000 medicinal plants appeared in front of them, and the vast majority were shocked.

"Huh? How come it's exactly like the tests Alchemist Fang gave us?"

"This seems... actually, kind of simple! I know almost all of these...."

"One hundred breaths of time? I've practiced so many times, I'm used to

it!" Virtually all of the apprentice alchemists were shocked and excited. Earlier, they never believed that they could succeed, but now they suddenly felt hope.

Time passed by.... One thousand breaths.

Of course, the onlookers were all still laughing about the matter.

"I really don't get what Fang Qun is thinking. And as for all those apprentice alchemists, they don't know the height of the Heavens and the depths of the Earth. There's no way they can succeed."

"Time's almost up. They'll be coming out soon. If even one of them succeeds, I'll beat myself to death."

It was at this point that a beam of light appeared on the first level. Instantly, the laughing was silenced.

"Wow, somebody actually succeeded? Well, I guess out of four hundred people, it was inevitable that someone would get lucky...."

"It's possible that person is a Chosen in the Dao of alchemy. It's a given that someone like that would perform shockingly."

Even as the discussions broke out, silence once again reigned as a second beam of light appeared on the first level.

After that, a third, fourth, and a fifth.... 113 beams of light appeared in the blink of an eye. They formed a dazzling spectacle that could be seen from quite a distance away.

The onlookers were deathly quiet and stared with gaping mouths. Their eyes were wide and filled with disbelief, and their minds roared.

This vastly exceeded anything they could have ever imagined, and they could hardly believe it.

It was at this point that, from within the dazzling lights, four hundred apprentice alchemists appeared. The ones who had succeeded in passing the first level were wild with joy. As for the ones who had met with failure, they weren't dejected at all. Instead, their eyes shone brightly with hope; they knew that they had come very close to succeeding.

All of them rushed over to Meng Hao and began crying out excitedly.

“That was so simple! I actually identified all of them!!”

“I did it! Hahaha! I passed! I’ve only studied the Dao of alchemy for three years, but I passed the first level of the Medicine Pavilion and I succeeded!!”

“Thank you, Alchemist Fang! Thank you!!”

Fang Qun was equally excited.

Meng Hao smiled widely, then cleared his throat. After glancing over at the shocked onlookers, he looked back at the apprentices and then put a solemn expression onto his face.

“What’s there to be excited about? What’s the surprise?

“During these three months, you paid a few hundred merit points to listen to my lectures about plants and vegetation, so the big surprise would be if you didn’t pass the measly first level of the Medicine Pavilion.

“Now, all of you, tell me. Was it worth it to spend those merit points on listening to my lectures?”

The instant the question left his mouth, the more than four hundred apprentice alchemists joined their voices into a mighty roar of approval. All of the onlookers began to tremble inwardly.

Meng Hao laughed heartily, then turned to leave, sure that this matter would quickly turn into a massive wave that swept through all of the Dao of Alchemy Division.

“I need to stop giving lectures for a few days,” he thought. “I’ll wait a bit... and then there will surely be more people willing to fork over their merit points.” His eyes glittered with anticipation.

However, Meng Hao had actually underestimated the matter. Over the course of the following days, the Dao of Alchemy Division was struck by a massive tempest. After all, four hundred people had simultaneously taken the Medicine Pavilion examination, and then more than one hundred had successfully passed.

That in and of itself was not shocking. However, when you took into account the amount of time those test takers had been studying the Dao of alchemy, it was completely astonishing.

Those who had studied the longest had five years under their belt. The shortest amount of time any of them had studied was three years. An event such as this was enough to cause shock even among the alchemists of the inner mountains.

It eventually reached the point that the Alchemist Council, which was responsible for the operational affairs of the Dao of Alchemy Division, called a session to discuss the matter. Nineteen alchemists converged in the meeting location; these were the Pavilion Elders of the Dao of Alchemy Division.

All of these nineteen Pavilion Elders were tier 8 alchemists!

Deep in the inner mountains, on the cloud-cloaked peak of a tall mountain, was an ancient temple. Ten enormous statues stood guard outside the temple, each one of which represented a glorious past alchemist of the Fang Clan's Dao of Alchemy Division.

This was the location where the Alchemist Council held their session. In the main hall of the temple, nineteen enormous seats floated in the air, in the middle of which was an enormous illusory pill cauldron that emanated flickering light.

The seats were occupied by ancient old men with extraordinary cultivation bases, and whose Dao of alchemy could shake Heaven and Earth. Any one of these old men could be the founding Grandmaster of an alchemic sect.

"Fang Hao arrived four months ago from Planet South Heaven," said one of the old men, whose face was covered with wrinkles. He barely seemed to have the energy to open his eyes, but a strong medicinal aroma was eternally attached to him. "With a 30,000-meter Bloodline Gatebeam, he is a Chosen of the clan. Later, the Grand Elder from the main clan arranged for him to come to the Dao of Alchemy Division. Therefore, tier 5 alchemist Fang Huiguo took responsibility to send him to Alchemy

Lodge Peak #7191!

“I made some of my own inquiries, and also got some answers from Fang Huiguo. Fang Huiguo believed that while Fang Hao might have some understanding regarding pill concocting, he was also wildly arrogant. Let’s ignore his subjective presumptions for now. Within two hours of Fang Hao’s arrival at Peak #7191, he discovered twelve areas in which tier 1 alchemist Fang Qun made errors in explaining plants and vegetation. Fang Hao then personally gave a lecture about the subject that attracted tens of thousands of spectators.

“Tier 2 alchemist Fang Xuzhong was incited by the main clan’s Fang Yunyi to challenge Fang Hao, making a wager regarding plants and vegetation. Fang Hao easily defeating him, instantly identifying the top secret grafting technique of a tier 5 alchemist, and also revealing the collocation technique. I personally went to verify that the collocation technique was indeed correct!

“Later, he used his plant and vegetation lectures to collect merit points from the audience....” At this point, the old man paused. Some of the other elders began to chuckle.

“His audience dwindled to only a few hundred people, and his profit ranged only in the tens of thousands of merit points. Unsatisfied, he went to the Medicine Pavilion, where he took the examination 140 times in a row.

“He didn’t pass, not even once. However, that was because he intentionally failed. After finishing, he organized all the information about plants and vegetation from the exam and began to lecture the apprentice alchemists of Peak #7191 regarding... all of the test material from the first level of the Medicine Pavilion.

“In this way, by developing a cheating technique and preparing the apprentice alchemists for the test by training them in the test method. He then took four hundred people to the first level of the Medicine Pavilion, and over one hundred of them succeeded.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, these are the results of my investigation into

Fang Hao. What do all of you think?" The old man's voice was cool the entire time. Even he found Meng Hao to be somewhat amusing.

People immediately began to voice varying opinions.

"Is the kid crazy or something? I can't believe he charged merit points for lectures on plants and vegetation! Why didn't I think of that when I was his age!?"

"Amusing, but in the end it was cheating. He should be punished somehow. Perhaps have him clear out the pill rubbish receptacles?"

"No way! A punishment like that is too severe. Let me handle it. I'll have him try to concoct some of my pills for me; I'll show him a thing or two."

"That's not really cheating. To be able to memorize all of the medicinal plants from the first level of the Medicine Pavilion shows that he has a terrifying level of skill with plants and vegetation. I'm curious to see what level he could get to in the pavilion if he really tried."

There were differing views on the matter. Some of them thought it was nothing more than a small matter, and were actually interested in Meng Hao. Others thought he was a problem waiting to happen, which should be punished and dealt with immediately.

Eventually, everyone finished speaking without reaching a consensus. Located in the middle of the nineteen chairs was an old man who wore a long robe and had flowing white hair. He hadn't spoken the entire time and was instead sitting there with his eyes closed. Finally, his eyes opened, and they seemed to be filled with starlight. It was as if all the heavenly bodies had been shockingly fused together, and existed inside of him.

He cleared his throat.

In that moment, all of the other elder alchemists quieted down and looked at the old man with expressions of ardor and veneration.

"He's nothing more than a member of the Junior generation," the old man said slowly. "Let him do as he pleases. Although, the rules of the first level of the Medicine Pavilion will need to be changed."

In response to his word, all of the Pavilion Elders bowed their heads in acquiescence.

As they did, a strange light appeared in the old man's eyes.

"Kunlun Society alchemy methods... and some vestiges of the Demon Immortal Sect. Interesting. Very interesting."

# Chapter 911: Changes in the Dao of Alchemy Division

When four hundred apprentice alchemists all challenged the Medicine Pavilion together, and over a hundred succeeded, the news didn't cause a huge stir in the inner mountains, but in the outer mountains, a tempest erupted.

To any apprentice alchemist, passing the first level of the Medicine Pavilion was a major step in life, and something incredibly important. That was even more so for those who had been studying for dozens or even more than a hundred years, and yet still could not pass. They were on the verge of going crazy.

Then there were the apprentice alchemists who hadn't been studying for very long. When they saw others who had been studying for a similar period of time suddenly succeed, and not because they were naturally gifted, but rather, because they had studied with Fang Hao, and listened to his lectures, it is easy to imagine how violent of an uproar it caused.

Even more so, the apprentice alchemists who had chosen not to pay merit points to listen to Meng Hao felt intense regret, and couldn't help but think about how a few hundred merit points over the course of three months could have gotten them past the first level of the Medicine Pavilion. Then they would have been pre-qualified to become tier 1 alchemists, which could not be bought with merit points, no matter how many they offered to pay.

Meng Hao didn't make an appearance for three days. In the meantime, the storm among the outer mountain apprentice alchemists continued. Tens of thousands had gathered outside of Peak #7191 to wait for Meng Hao. Some people even got into magical combat in order to get a good seat.

On dawn of the fourth day, Meng Hao appeared in the Dao of Alchemy Division. A soon as people spotted him, word spread like wildfire.

Meng Hao was quite pleased about all this. Murmuring to himself about how his methods really were effective, he eventually reached Peak #7191. When he saw how many people were waiting, he immediately got excited.

"There have to be about 40-50,000 people here," he thought, panting. "At one merit point a piece for a two hour lecture, I would get around 50,000 merit points! If I lecture for four hours, it would be 100,000. If I lectured for eight hours, 200,000!!" Eventually, he took a deep breath. Smiling the whole way, looking like a preeminent Daoist master who viewed material wealth as filth, he slowly strode forward.

When all of the apprentice alchemists gathered around the mountain saw him, they clasped hands and bowed. Then, they joined voices in greeting.

"Greetings, Professor Fang!"

The combined voices of all the apprentice alchemists echoed out like thunder. Meng Hao stepped foot onto the platform, looked out at the audience with shining eyes, and then cleared his throat.

"Today, I will lecture for eight hours," he said.

Immediately, Fang Xi flew out of the crowd with a jade slip in hand, and called out, "Professor Fang is kind and generous. To him, material wealth means nothing. In previous months, we had to force him to accept our payment. Now, because he cannot bear to watch the clan's apprentice alchemists fail the examination of the Medicine Pavilion, he has come here to lecture about plants and vegetation. We can't let him down!"

"Come come. Everyone put some merit points into this jade slip. Even if Professor Fang doesn't want it, we'll force him to take it!" At the same time that Fang Xi yelled out these words, a group of several hundred apprentice alchemists flew out from the crowd in various areas, jade slips in the hand. They immediately began to accept merit points from the other apprentice alchemists in their area.

This time, not a single one of the 40-50,000 people departed. All of them paid their merit points, and then the several hundred jade slips were placed in front of Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's face darkened.

"What do you people think you're doing!?" he snapped, flicking his sleeve and looked very displeased.

Yet again, Fang Xi took the lead in crying out.

"Professor Fang, this is only what should be yours by right. Sir, please accept!" When Fang Xi finished speaking, his hundreds of companions began to shout.

"Accept it, Professor Fang. If you don't, we'll be very upset!"

After listening for a moment, Meng Hao hesitated, then let out a long sigh and collected up the jade slips.

"Very well," he said emotionally. "Since you demand it, all I can do is work as hard as possible to help you pass the examination of the Medicine Pavilion.

"Material wealth is nothing," he said, shaking his head. "What I care least about in life is just that, money." Inwardly, of course, he was extremely excited and was shouting about how he was rich now.

The eight hour lecture ended quickly. Meng Hao again talked about the key medicinal plants from the medicine pavilion. After a while, he would wave his hand, causing a thousand medicinal plants to appear, just like the examination in the Medicine Pavilion. Many of the apprentice alchemists who were experiencing this for the first time were instantly enlivened.

In the following days, Meng Hao was engrossed in lecturing about plants and vegetation. He lectured for eight hours a day, and as time progressed, more and more people came to listen, until the audience exceeded 100,000!

The area was packed full of people, and no end could be seen to the massive crowds. This only spurred Meng Hao on to put even more energy into his lectures. He even employed his cultivation base and some divine abilities to broadcast his voice out into the distance so that every person could hear him

He was now making hundreds of thousands of merit points every day. To Meng Hao, that income was a powerful motivating force. Eventually, his lectures became the center of attention of all the outer mountains.

As Meng Hao got more and more merit points, he was able to get more and more valuable medicinal plants. As such, the ingredients he needed for the Spirit Elixir were all replaced by what could be considered treasured items. Soon, the efficacy of the Spirit Elixir reached a terrifying level.

As for the leftover merit points, he would acquire other medicinal plants, which he would take to his Immortal's cave to concoct medicinal pills. This enabled his Dao of alchemy to steadily improve with each passing day.

He would also exchange merit points for spirit stones, which he would use to duplicate the Spirit Elixir. The life force in the Nirvana Fruits continued to grow stronger.

Of course, not a few people saw what was happening, and their eyes went bloodshot. The other alchemists gazed over at Meng Hao like ravenous wolves. Although they had never thought to use a method like his, when they saw how much he was profiting, many of them began to imitate him. There were even tier 5 alchemists who left the inner mountains and began to lecture about plants and vegetation, all in order to earn merit points.

Because the Alchemist Council didn't oppose what was happening, it meant they tacitly approved. In fact, they were happy that more alchemists were opting not to spend all their time concocting pills, but instead, were going to the outer mountains to speak to the apprentice alchemists about plants and vegetation, as well as the Dao of alchemy.

It was as if the entire Dao of Alchemy Division was invigorated, and now bustled with activity. Things were very different than before. Now that more alchemists were coming out of the inner mountains and charging to give lectures, some of Meng Hao's audience was being drawn away. However, there were a million apprentice alchemists in the Dao of

Alchemy Division, so even if a few left, others would take their place. The Dao of Alchemy became a place where numerous viewpoints and expressions were now being heard, and everyone was struggling to promote their own perspective.

Alchemists began using all sorts of methods to attract more apprentice alchemists to their lectures. Some would even lecture about their top secret methods. Gradually, because they were able to attract more and more attention, everyone was able to make a handsome profit.

Soon, tier 6 alchemists and even some tier 7 alchemists were moved to the point of emerging from the inner mountains. The atmosphere in the Dao of Alchemy Division had reached a peak, and even the main clan was affected, and the Grand Elder, shocked, made a personal visit.

That event caused quite a stir, and word soon spread throughout the clan.

As the apprentice alchemists began to run low on merit points, they chose to perform service for the sect, all to get more merit points. People even began to compete over the tasks assigned by the Dao of Alchemy Division. Everything was flourishing.

“What a change in the Dao of Alchemy Division!” Even the nineteen tier 8 alchemists were very excited. They watched the developments in the atmosphere in the Dao of Alchemy Division, and could tell that if things kept going on this way, the Dao of Alchemy Division would definitely experience a great rise, and a new generation of alchemists would soon come forth.

All of it started with Meng Hao, and because of it, everyone was once again speaking his name!

Back in the ancestral mansion, the Grand Elder sat silently in the temple, his face dark. It had already been several months since he gave Meng Hao the Nirvana Fruits, and there had been plenty of time for him to concoct whatever type of Spirit Elixir he wanted. And yet, Meng Hao had not suddenly died. By this point, the Grand Elder was starting to put the pieces together.

"I underestimated him," he thought with a sigh. "He must have detected something somehow. What a pity.... In any clan, clan rules are everything. All clan members must respect the clan rules. As for him...." The Grand Elder shook his head, and within his eyes could be seen a glint of killing intent.

In another temple in the ancestral mansion, Fang Xiushan and his father sat there, extremely grim faced because of the huge name Meng Hao was making for himself.

"That damned son of a bitch!" grumbled Fang Xiushan, frowned. "He actually thought up a scheme like this to earn large amounts of merit points!! The amount he's earning on a daily basis is enough to cause even my eyes to turn red.... With things like this, it's going to be impossible to constrain his development." He looked over at his father.

The old man opened his eyes, and a cold glimmer could be seen within.

"What are you losing your head over?" he said coolly. "He's just a child. The only reason he came up with this method was because someone from the direct bloodline is coaching him. Even still, it doesn't matter.

"I have my methods to cut off his source of merit points!" With that, he produced a jade slip, imprinted it with some divine sense, and then flung it out the door.

"Just wait and see," he said, closing his eyes once again.

As Meng Hao rose to prominence, Fang Donghan, who was a member of one of the neutral bloodlines in the clan, was watching. From the very beginning, he had been paying attention to Meng Hao and Fang Wei, and now that he saw Meng Hao becoming famous in the Dao of Alchemy Division, his sense of anticipation was growing. 1

"It won't be long now before he and Fang Wei fight each other!" he thought. He took a deep breath and then smiled.

In the ancestral mansion, in the subterranean Immortal's cave, Fang Wei sat cross-legged in meditation. Yet again, there were nine old men surrounding him, who trembled as their Immortal qi was absorbed by

Fang Wei.

Fang Yunyi kneeled in front of him respectfully, eyes shining with zeal as he looked at Fang Wei.

A moment later, Fang Wei opened his eyes and finished his session of cultivation. Of the surrounding nine old men, three of them coughed up blood, and then their bodies rapidly withered away until they were desiccated corpses.

“What’s the matter, Yunyi?” Fang Wei asked coolly.

“Cousin,” replied Fang Yunyi, “your Cultivation base is incredible. You’re just a step away from the Immortal Realm. When you finally become Immortal, you’ll be able to sweep across all of the Chosen of the Ninth Mountain and Sea!”

Fang Wei’s expression was the same as ever, and he didn’t respond. He just looked at Fang Yunyi.

“Cousin,” continued Fang Yunyi, “do you remember Fang Hao? He’s that bastard who was disrespectful to you in the temple a while back. You are generous and open-minded, and would never sink yourself to his level, but he’s not like that. He is narrow and petty-minded, and already views you as a thorn in his side.

“Recently, he’s been using despicable methods to make a name for himself in the Dao of Alchemy Division, and he’s even started spreading harmful gossip about you. Cousin, he’s tarnishing your name, which really makes me mad. Unfortunately, I can’t beat him. I can only watch as he rises to prominence in the Dao of Alchemy Division.” Fang Yunyi chuckled bitterly.

Fang Wei’s expression was the same as usual. He seemed neither joyful nor angry. He looked calmly at Fang Yunyi, as if he could see all the way through him, as if he could tell exactly how much of what he had just said was true or false.

Seeing that Fang Wei was studying him, Fang Yunyi suddenly began to tremble in fear. He had no idea what Fang Wei was thinking, so he didn’t

dare to say anything further. He was just considering leaving, when Fang Wei finally spoke.

“Tell me about it.”

Fang Yunyi was immediately enlivened, and began to explain in detail everything Meng Hao had done in the Dao of Alchemy Division.

After listening to everything, Fang Wei closed his eyes for a few moments. Then he opened them and coolly said, “There are a lot of people in the world who like to get things for free. When you have the option of getting something for free, or paying, most people will opt for the first. Fang Yunyi, do you get my meaning?”

Fang Yunyi gaped. After a moment of thought, his eyes grew bright, and he rose excitedly to his feet, laughing.

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In chapter 826, Fang Donghan mused about Meng Hao and Fang Wei fighting.

# Chapter 912: Hardships Prompt Changes!

The Dao of Alchemy Division was undergoing a renaissance in the form of competition. One high level alchemist after another came out from the inner mountains to give lectures, all to get merit points from the apprentice alchemists. The Dao of Alchemy Division was booming, and the bustle was incredible.

Furthermore, competitive fire is something that exists in all people's hearts, and although the alchemists didn't pay too much attention to it, everyone knew that the number of apprentices that could be attracted to any given alchemist's lecture would show how much influence that alchemist had, as well as the level of their Dao of alchemy.

Soon, competition between various parties formed. However, the resulting conflicts proceeded according to the Dao of Alchemy Division's rules governing competition. The result was that in the outer mountains, the apprentice alchemists had to make a daily choice: which alchemist would they go listen to?

Of course, Meng Hao wasn't very happy about this. More and more of his audience was being stolen away. In the end, he was only able to keep about 50,000. That was about half of his original audience, which meant that he was losing out on over 100,000 merit points per day.

It was as if someone was slicing off his skin.

He could endure it though. After all, his lecture was something unique, and in the end, the apprentice alchemists who listened to his lectures had exponential increases in their confidence in being able to pass the first level of the Medicine Pavilion.

However, it wasn't long before Meng Hao became furious. The reason was because, on the mountain just across from him, Peak #7192, a tier 7 alchemist had suddenly appeared to give lectures.

It was an old woman who rode an enormous five-colored peacock, and whose expression was haughty and arrogant. She was a tier 7 alchemist, someone the apprentice alchemists could only hope to meet in person on

accident, and could never go to seek out. She was like a supreme entity to them.

Up to now, there had only been one tier 7 alchemist who had come out to give lectures. Furthermore, that alchemist did not come out on a daily basis. The 100,000 seats available for those lectures were always the subject of fierce contention. In fact, were there even more seats available, it was certain that more people would attend.

Now, another tier 7 alchemist appeared. She was very famous in the Dao of Alchemy Division, and when she came to give a lecture right across from Meng Hao, a lot of the alchemists in his audience immediately went over to listen to her.

In a single day, Meng Hao lost more than half of his current audience, leaving him with only about 20,000 apprentice alchemists. He stood there on the platform, looking at the 100,000 people crowded around that old woman, and ground his teeth angrily.

"That old granny is doing this on purpose!" he thought with a cold harrumph. The outer mountains were vast, and the lecturing alchemists would always distance themselves from each other, and would certainly never get very close. Considering the old woman intentionally selected this particular location, if someone tried to convince Meng Hao she wasn't doing it to target him, he would refuse to believe them.

Any apprentice alchemists who came to listen to Meng Hao would look the scene over and then be forced to make a decision. Would they listen to Meng Hao, or would they choose the tier 7 alchemist? Meng Hao was furious, especially because the old woman only charged one merit point for four hours of lecturing.

That was half as much as Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's audience continued to shrink. Three days later, only about 10,000 remained to listen to him.

Were that all there were to the matter, it wouldn't be a big deal. Although his audience had been significantly reduced, he was still making tens of thousands of merit points per day. But over the following days,

Meng Hao gradually came to the realization that someone had been imprinting his lecture information onto jade slips, which they were distributing for free! Information people had to pay three merit points to hear personally, could be acquired without charge in this fashion.

This was a near-fatal blow to Meng Hao's lectures. Soon, his audience dwindled from 10,000 down to only about 1,000.

Meng Hao could only watch helplessly as the enterprise he had created was ruined. His audience had started at a peak of 100,000 members, in which he was making hundreds of thousands of merit points per day, and was slowly reduced to only 1,000. Now, he was only making a few thousand merit points per day.

One day, Meng Hao took a deep breath and ended his lecture. Then he flew over to the old woman, paid some merit points, and began to listen to her speak.

The old woman sat cross-legged on the platform, her five-colored peacock circling through the air above her. The peacock would occasionally spread its beautiful tail feathers, making it even more magnificent than normal. The old woman spoke indifferently about plants and vegetation, and occasionally mentioned some things about certain techniques of the Dao of alchemy, which would provoke a buzz of comments from the audience. Every single thing the old woman said was original and distinctive.

Naturally, she noticed Meng Hao arrive, and an expression of scorn appeared on her face. There weren't even a hundred tier 7 alchemists in the Dao of Alchemy Division, and although she was not the most powerful among that group, but more toward the middle of the pack, she still possessed the skill of a tier 7 alchemist. She had passed the seventh level of the Medicine Pavilion, so it was a simple thing for her to speak on the subject of plants and vegetation.

Her command of knowledge regarding plants and vegetation was terrifying, and normally speaking, she would never show her face to target Meng Hao in the manner she had. However, a member of her auxiliary

branch, someone who she could not easily refuse, had made a request. Of course, she was a member of the Dao of Alchemy Division, which operated under their own system. But when all was said and done, she was still a member of her clan division, and thus had emerged from the inner mountains.

In her opinion, the gap between herself and Meng Hao was as vast as that between Heaven and Earth. She didn't even actually have to try; all she had to do was give random lectures, and that would be enough to completely destroy Meng Hao.

Meng Hao hovered there quietly, listening to the woman speak about plants and vegetation. After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, his eyes flashed, and he turned to leave. The woman glanced over at him making his way off, and then completely ignored him.

In her opinion, Meng Hao's lecture audience would be whittled down until only a few hundred people remained. Eventually, he would be incapable of making any big waves whatsoever.

The main reason for her confidence was that she had heard a rumor that the rules of the examination in the first level of the Medicine Pavilion were going to be changed.

Sure enough, three days later, an announcement was made in the Dao of Alchemy Division that the Medicine Pavilion's first level rules had been changed. All of the 1,000,000 medicinal plants had been replaced. Now, the examination content could be taken from 10,000,000 plants of various varieties. It was really a terrifyingly high number.

In addition, another rule change had been made. Now, the test was to determine how many medicinal plants could be identified in a given period of time. That change instantly caused Meng Hao's lectures to be thrown into chaos. To top it all off, and prevent any unforeseen problems, each apprentice alchemist would only have one chance per month to enter the Medicine Pavilion.

These changes completely foiled any of Meng Hao's cheating techniques.

All of this was a critical blow to Meng Hao. Within two days, his audience dropped from 1,000 to only a few hundred.

Most of those were the people who had been his audience all along.

However, after some time, many of those also chose to leave. After all, the situation was different than it had been in the beginning, when Meng Hao was outshining anyone and everyone. After all, they now had the chance to hear tier 7 alchemists speak, and who would turn down an opportunity like that?

In the end, Meng Hao was left with a bit more than 70 audience members....

All of these blows had struck like lightning, leaving Meng Hao panting. He looked out at his sparse audience of several dozen apprentice alchemists, and suddenly a bright light appeared in his eyes. Then, he turned his head to look over at the nearby mountain with 100,000 people circled around it.

“Coz, what do we do?” Fang Xi asked quietly from off to the side. “Even Lord Third and Lord Fifth headed over there....” Unexpectedly, the parrot and the meat jelly had rushed over to the other mountain to listen to the tier 7 alchemist’s lecture. It was impossible to say whether they understood what she was talking about, but from the look of it, they were entranced.

Meng Hao, of course, knew that the parrot was actually hung up on the five-colored peacock. As for the meat jelly, it was completely oblivious, and had merely been dragged along by the parrot.

“Hardships prompt changes, changes bring solutions!”

Fang Xi gaped.

“Somebody is trying to restrict my path to wealth, to cut off my path to riches! It’s like they’re trying to chop me into pieces with a knife!” Meng Hao clenched his jaw and then flicked his sleeve as he flew into the air.

Fang Xi followed as he made his way off into the distance. He didn’t really understand what Meng Hao had just said, so he quickly asked, “Coz,

what's the plan now?"

"There's no plan," Meng Hao replied, "My name is going to rock the Dao of Alchemy Division, and END this predicament!" As his voice echoed out, he pushed his speed to the maximum. Rumbling sounds could be heard as he shot into the inner mountains. Avoiding any restricted areas, he headed directly toward the Medicine pavilion.

It didn't take long to reach it.

There were a few apprentice alchemists gathered outside, hesitating as to whether or not to enter. There were even some full alchemists off to the side. They all noticed Meng Hao arrive, and suddenly seemed energized, and began to talk amongst themselves.

"I heard word spreading outside that the rules of the first level have been changed. It was all because Fang Hao memorized the entire first level, and figured out some way to cheat. That's how all those apprentice alchemists were able to pass so easily!"

"Could it be that he's shown up to try to figure out a way to cheat on the first level again?"

"Interesting. Although, considering the way the rules have been changed, it would be difficult to do that. He can only go in once per month."

Meng Hao didn't pause for even a moment as he headed toward the Medicine Pavilion. The two ancient old men sitting outside the pavilion opened their eyes and looked at Meng Hao. Although they didn't normally pay attention to what went on in the outside world, the occasion in which Meng Hao had charged through the first level 140 times had left a deep impression on them. Combined with the rumors they had heard, they now knew that Meng Hao's efforts back then had been a deliberate effort to study the level for the purposes of cheating.

The two old men looked at Meng Hao solemnly.

"This is the Dao of Alchemy Division," one of them said. "How can one always think of getting in via alternative paths? Your latent talent is excellent, as is your skill in plants and vegetation. You should tread the

straight and narrow path.”

Meng Hao, apparently directly accepting the advice, clasped hands and bowed to the two old men.

“Elders,” he said immediately, “I am aware of my mistake. Now is the time for repentance and reformation. I am not here to research cheating methods. I am here to truly test myself!”

The two old men nodded and closed their eyes.

Meng Hao took a deep breath. As everyone in the area looked on, he stepped into the Medicine Pavilion. As soon as he entered, a few among the Dao of Alchemy Division’s nineteen tier 8 alchemists immediately noticed. They ceased their pill concocting and sent out divine sense, which coalesced outside of the Medicine Pavilion.

It was three white-haired old men who materialized.

“Don’t tell me this Fang Hao has showed up looking for ways to break the system again? Is he addicted?”

“How can the little bastard be such a slow learner? We spent a lot of effort to make the first level completely flawless, and yet he shows up again?!”

“If this kid gets up to troublesome things again, I have half a mind to pull him out and smack him around. I wouldn’t be scared even if his father showed up. I concocted pills for his father once, you know.”

Although they seemed angry, they were actually very excited. In all their years, no one had ever appeared who could cause so many problems for them. To them, the whole situation was very amusing.

No one was able to detect their presence except for the two old men keeping guard outside the Medicine Pavilion, who merely glanced at them.

# Chapter 913: Changes Bring Solutions!

“Hardships prompt changes, changes bring solutions!” Meng Hao’s eyes shone with the light of obsession. This saying was something he had come across in a book he had read when he was a scholar living at the foot of Mount Daqing.

Nowadays, he had not forgotten the true meaning of the phrase. However, because of his personality, he had come to a new understanding. To him, the first character of the expression... referred to being poor! 1

“If I can’t make a profit when it comes to merit points, then it means I’m poor... therefore I need to think of some ways to change the situation. That’s the only way to make it through the impasse. After I make it through, then I can start earning merit points again.”

After stepping into the first level of the Medicine Pavilion, Meng Hao was surrounded by mists. He took a deep breath, and his eyes began to shine brightly.

“In the past, I didn’t have a lot of spirit stones, but with over 100,000,000, it couldn’t count as being in short supply.... But, dammit! The Nirvana Fruits basically consume spirit stones! I barely have thirty percent of my original stockpile....

“It’s like a bottomless pit! Considering I’ve spent so many spirit stones on them, I definitely can’t stop now. I have to keep going! I wonder if the Grand Elder knew all along that I had a lot of spirit stones, and wanted to use this method to force me to go broke!

“A tier 7 alchemist sitting next to me, lecturing about plants and vegetation, cutting off my path to wealth! That’s outright bullying! Unbelievable!” Meng Hao was actually very angry.

Fueled by obsession and anger, he stalked into the first level of the Medicine Pavilion and was surrounding by swirling mists. In the blink of an eye, three incense sticks materialized in front of him.

Black smoke rose up from the first incense stick, swirling through the air

to surround Meng Hao. Shockingly, a brilliant light appeared, as well as the images of countless medicinal plants.

At first glance, there appeared to be at least 10,000,000, packed together endlessly. It was only by looking closely that it was possible to clearly make any of them out.

In the space of a single breath, before Meng Hao could imprint any of them with divine sense, the 10,000,000 medicinal plants suddenly flickered with light, and then began to superimpose over each other. In the blink of an eye, they all merged together in the form of an ancient tome.

The book seemed archaic and old, and three characters were written on its cover.

Classic of Plants and Vegetation. (草木经)

Next, an ancient voice echoed out through the first level.

“In the time it takes three incense sticks to burn, identify the first 10,000 medicinal plants in the Classic of Plants and Vegetation. If you make a hundred mistakes or more, the result will be failure.”

“Now that the rules have changed,” thought Meng Hao, “this test is certainly a bit more impressive.” He sent out his divine sense to open the Classic of Plants and Vegetation to the first page. Visible there was a single medicinal plant.

“Quickspirit Flower!” he thought, identifying it immediately, branding it with divine sense, and also providing a quick description of its properties and use in medicines.

The tome flickered, and the second page appeared. Meng Hao made another divine sense imprint with incredible speed. Gradually, it began to appear as if a strong wind were blowing across the tome in front of Meng Hao. The pages flipped rapidly in quick succession.

Meng Hao stood there, not speaking, his divine sense covering the tome. To him, identifying these medicinal plants was a simple matter.

Before the incense stick had even finished burning, it seemed as if the tome's pages were flipping by so fast they couldn't go any faster. Dozens of pages would flip by in the blink of an eye. By the time the incense stick had burned to about 90%, Meng Hao had already identified 10,000 medicinal plants without making a single mistake.

However, he didn't stop there. If his goal was simply to pass the level, then it wouldn't matter. But if he was going to take this exam, he would do so in shocking fashion. He would make sure his name spread far and wide. That was the only way he could ensure that his lectures on plants and vegetation were profitable.

Therefore, he continued to identify medicinal plants. Soon, hundreds of pages flipped by in every blink of an eye. As soon as Meng Hao scanned them with divine sense, the profiles and information regarding these plants and vegetation appeared in his mind.

10,000. 30,000. 50,000. 100,000.

Faster and faster.

In the time it took an incense stick to burn, Meng Hao had identified 1,000,000 medicinal plants without a single mistake. The mist around him churned, and brilliant rays of light flickered. It was just barely possible to see countless magical symbols swirling around in response to Meng Hao's miraculous performance.

Outside the Medicine Pavilion, it was impossible to tell what was happening on the inside. Many of the full alchemists and the apprentice alchemists were discussing and speculating about the matter. None of them believed that Meng Hao would fail to pass the level, but then they considered how the rules had been changed, and figured that even he might have to expend some effort.

The three old tier 8 alchemists looked at each other and then began to talk.

"How come the kid is taking so long?"

"If he's really interested in taking the examination, then he should be

able to pass the first level in the time it takes an incense stick to burn. Since he hasn't come out, does it mean... that the kid is actually going to try to crack the test?"

Back in the Medicine Pavilion, Meng Hao was frowning.

"Time's running out. It seems I was going a bit slow before." His eyes flickered, and his right hand suddenly reached out to grab the tome's right cover. At the same time, his divine sense exploded out, entering the tome. Meng Hao closed his eyes.

In that moment when his eyes closed, his divine sense filled the tome completely. It was as if countless medicinal plants had appeared in front of him, which he immediately began to identify and imprint at top speed.

1,000,000. 1,500,000. 2,000,000!

In the blink of an eye, rumbling sounds could be heard, and the mists surrounding him were churning in a violent and shocking manner. Brilliant light shone out, and more magical symbols appeared, with Meng Hao seemingly at the center of them all.

3,000,000. 4,000,000. 5,000,000!

The second incense stick was almost completely burnt out. Meng Hao's skill in plants and vegetation was extremely deep and profound, so much so that it had even left Pill Demon shaken back in his days in the Violet Fate Sect. When you added in his later experiences, his mastery had only increased. By the time he went to the ancient Demon Immortal Sect's illusory world, he had been able to master much of that sect's Dao of alchemy as well. Due to that, his skill in plants and vegetation had risen even higher, reaching an indescribably terrifying level.

Right now, all of that accumulated knowledge was exploding out, causing the tome's pages to flip by at incredible speed. It was now impossible to even see the pages moving. Several thousand pages would flip by in the time it takes to blink an eye.

The second incense stick finished burning, and the third incense stick ignited. Meng Hao grabbed the other side of the tome with his left hand. It

was at that point that eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal exploded out.

Glittering light shone out in all directions, and the mists were seething. A sound like thunder rumbled, and the magical symbols swirled around him endlessly. As of now, this place didn't resemble the Medicine Pavilion, but rather, some bizarre world in which Meng Hao was the nucleus of everything.

By now, 10,000 pages flipped by with each blink of an eye. Not a single medicinal plant caused the slightest problem for Meng Hao. Each and every one of them was already encompassed by Meng Hao's skill with plants and vegetation.

Outside the Medicine Pavilion, expressions of bewilderment could constantly be heard. Although they couldn't see the shocking scene on the interior of the Medicine Pavilion, they felt that something was amiss. Even though some of the people present had ill feelings toward Meng Hao, everyone felt that it would be a simple matter for him to pass the first level.

And yet, enough time had passed for two incense sticks to burn, and yet Meng Hao still hadn't emerged from the first level. Everyone was astonished.

However, the three tier-8 alchemists had serious expressions on their faces. As they looked at the Medicine Pavilion's first level, expressions of shock became visible on their faces. Although they couldn't see what was happening inside, these three men were gradually coming to realize that the first floor was building up with incredible pressure.

"What's this kid doing?!"

"That pressure appears when someone identifies more than 1,000,000 medicinal plants. Is it possible that this kid has identified more than 1,000,000 medicinal plants in the time it takes two incense sticks to burn?"

As the old men looked on in shock, Meng Hao had his hands planted firmly on the tome. His eyes shone with brilliant light as he thoroughly

identified all of its contents.

6,000,000. 7,000,000. 8,000,000....

The third incense stick was still burning, but still had about halfway to go. Finally, a tremor ran through Meng Hao's body, and he looked up. His hands slowly released the tome. He had finally reached the very last page!

10,000,000!!

The entire first level of the Medicine Pavilion was rumbling, and brilliant light shone out in all directions. Magical symbols swirled about, and something that sounded like Immortal music could be heard drifting about.

Usually, when someone passed the first level, a beam of light would appear on the outside. However, when Meng Hao reached the last page of the tome, what people on the outside saw was the entire first level shining with unprecedentedly bright light!

It was as if the first level was completely bathed in boundless, unfathomable light that spread out in all directions, and even up into the Heavens. The Heavenly bodies trembled, and strange colors flashed through the sky.

Each and every person in the Dao of Alchemy Division, in all 10,000 inner mountains and all 100,000 outer mountains, could now see what was happening.

“What’s going on!?!?”

“Why are there such transformations in Heaven and Earth!? What is that pillar of light!?!?”

All of the apprentice alchemists listening to lectures were thoroughly shocked as they looked up into the sky at the boundless light. As for the alchemists, their faces flickered with shock.

“Could it be that some member of the Senior generation is concocting pills?”

“No, that’s not it! Look at that light! It’s rising up from the location of

the Medicine Pavilion!"

Even the clan members in the ancestral mansion could see the bright light coming from the Dao of Alchemy Division. Many clan members left their residences and looked in that direction, expressions of shock on their faces.

Everything was shaking, and the countless apprentice alchemists of the Dao of Alchemy Division, as well as numerous full alchemists, were all staring in shock. When they realized that the light was coming from the Medicine Pavilion, they began to fly toward it.

In a brief moment, innumerable beams of colorful light filled the Dao of Alchemy Division.

The crowd outside the Medicine Pavilion was panting, and their minds trembled. They were shocked, and completely ignorant of what exactly was happening. They didn't understand how Meng Hao passing the first level would cause such a boundless light to appear.

The three tier 8 Elders exchanged glances and could see the shock in each others' eyes.

"He identified 10,000,000 medicinal plants! Because the rules have been changed, it's something that nobody has ever done before! The result of his passing the first level in this way is this incredible pillar of Dao Light!!"

"I can't believe this Fang Hao... has such an incredible foundation in plants and vegetation!!"

"That's comparable to a tier 4 alchemist! Perhaps even beyond that! However, it's still not quite at the level of a tier 5 alchemist."

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1. In Chinese, the first character of the phrase "Hardships prompt changes, changes bring solutions!" by itself could mean "poor," but the general meaning of the phrase refers to overcoming an impasse or difficult situation.



# Chapter 914: First in Level After Level

The Dao of Alchemy Division was in a tumult. More and more people were showing up outside the Medicine Pavilion to stare with astonishment at the brilliant light that shone up into the sky. Eyes wide, they immediately began to ask others in the area what was going on, and when they heard that Meng Hao had entered the Medicine Pavilion, giving rise to these transformations, their expressions were that of incredible shock.

“I can’t believe it’s Fang Hao!!”

“So, he’s the one going through the Medicine Pavilion. His... his skill in plants and vegetation actually made the Medicine Pavilion shine with that much light!?!?”

“I listened to one of his lectures on plants and vegetation once.... But, is the person who caused such shocking transformations really Fang Hao?” By now, more than 10,000 people were present. Even as everyone was staring in shock at the bright light, some people turned their attention to the stone stele outside of the Medicine Pavilion.

Hundreds of thousands of names could be seen on the lowest level of the stone stele. As of this moment... all of the names went dim, and then seemed to move backward one space. At the very top of the list... was a new name!

Fang Hao!!

When the onlookers saw the name there at the top of the list, another buzz of conversation rose up.

“It’s really Fang Hao! His name is first on the list!”

“Most people who pass this trial have their names show up in the bottom, and only a few ever make it even to the middle of the pack! And yet Fang Hao is actually in first place!”

“For him to take the first spot means that his skill with plants and vegetation is greater than all of the other hundreds of thousands of people on the list!”

“Of course, all the strong alchemists’ names are higher up on the stele. Who knows whether Fang Hao will actually continue higher in the Medicine Pavilion this time, or whether he’ll try to find a flaw in the system to benefit the apprentice alchemists, just like the rumors said he did last time.”

The conversations continued. Eventually, they realized that Meng Hao had not emerged from within the Medicine Pavilion. That led them to the conclusion that... he was continuing with the examination!

Everyone immediately got even more excited than before. Also, they wanted to know... the exact level of skill Meng Hao had with plants and vegetation, this newcomer who had just recently risen to prominence in the Dao of Alchemy Division.

It wasn’t just them who wanted to know. The surrounding alchemists were also very curious.

Inside the Medicine Pavilion, Meng Hao took a deep breath and waited for the mists around him to slowly fade away. A staircase appeared in front of him, which led to the second level. Meng Hao immediately headed up the stairs.

“If I’m going to shock people, then I might as well do a thorough job of it,” he thought. “I’m also curious how far my level of skill with plants and vegetation will take me in the Fang clan’s Medicine Pavilion.

“In the Fang Clan, plants and vegetation are the most important aspect of their Dao of alchemy. In order to rise among the ranks of the alchemists, one must first earn qualifications in the Medicine Pavilion. Actually, this system makes a distinction between apothecaries and alchemists!” After reaching the top of the stairs, he found himself on the second level.

Bright light filled the second level, and yet again, 10,000,000 medicinal plants appeared, some of them repeats from the first level. They quickly merged together into the form of a tome.

This time, it wasn’t three incense sticks that appeared in front of him, but six.

Yet again, an archaic voice echoed out through the second level.

"You have the time it takes six incense sticks to burn to identify the first 100,000 medicinal plants, in which case you can pass this level. If you make ten or more mistakes, you fail."

Meng Hao frowned, then looked around at the second level for a moment.

"So this is the second level," he thought. He stepped forward and opened the book, then poured his divine sense into it and began to imprint the medicinal plants.

Three incense sticks of time seemed to pass relatively quickly. Boundless light shone off of the tome; Meng Hao had already imprinted all 10,000,000 medicinal plants. Rumbling sounds filled the air, and another staircase appeared in front of him.

He climbed the stairs to the third level without hesitation. After looking around, an expression of disappointment could be seen on his face. The third level again featured 10,000,000 medicinal plants floating around, which then superimposed to create the same Classic of Plants and Vegetation.

However, the requirement to pass this level was not just to identify 100,000, but to identify 1,000,000, and also to list them in order according to a special method required by the ancient tome. Furthermore, just three mistakes would be considered a failure.

To Meng Hao, that wasn't very difficult at all. Shaking his head, he stepped forward and opened the ancient classic.

This time, he only needed two incense sticks' worth of time before the tome began to rumble, and the third level sent bright light outside. Yet again, Meng Hao had passed. When he reached the fourth level, his expression finally brightened.

What he saw on the fourth level was fully ten times as many medicinal plants as he had seen on the third level. There were over 100,000,000 plants, which caused his eyes to glow with a bright light.

“Now things are getting interesting,” he murmured. “Although there are still too few plants.” The 100,000,000 medicinal plants formed together into an ancient tome, which was labelled, yet again, the Classic of Plants and Vegetation.

The requirement for the fourth level was to identify 10,000,000 medicinal plants, without making any mistakes. A single mistake meant failure.

“100,000,000 medicinal plants, huh?” Meng Hao took a deep breath, eager to try. Back in the Violet Fate Sect, he had really enjoyed examinations like this. They reminded him of his scholar’s days back in Mount Daqing, and his experiences with the Imperial examinations.

Without hesitation, he placed his hands onto the book, poured in his divine sense, and immediately began to brand medicinal plants.

By now, over 100,000 people were standing around outside the Medicine Pavilion, having been drawn there by the bright lights. Before the light from the first level had even dissipated, a brilliant light already shone up from the second level, and then the third level.

Although the new light wasn’t as scintillating and blinding as the light from the first level, it was still shocking. Most importantly, as Meng Hao’s name moved up to the second and then the third level, it maintained its position as first in the lists!

Many of the surrounding alchemists were watching with very serious expressions.

“He’s gotten to the fourth level!”

“This Fang Hao passed all the way through the third level in a very short time. I wonder if the fourth level will cause any problems for him!?”

“In the Dao of Alchemy Division’s Medicine Pavilion, the first three levels are simply foundational. From what I’ve heard, no more than 10,000,000 medicinal plants will appear. The fourth level is different. The difficulty level is ten times higher!”

Back inside the fourth level, Meng Hao’s eyes shone with a bizarre light.

His divine sense rumbled as he imprinted medicinal plants at an incredible speed. He immediately recognized every medicinal plant that he saw, causing the tome's pages to flip by rapidly. It turned into a blur that, if any outsider was able to see, would leave them shocked.

Actually, Meng Hao wanted people on the outside to see. If they could watch, it would definitely be a big help in his efforts to earn merit points. After a moment, he retracted his divine sense and then decided to ask the Medicine Pavilion if such a thing was possible.

Everything was quiet for a moment, before an archaic voice slowly spoke out.

"The Medicine Pavilion has no such power now. However, if you can identify all 100,000,000 of these medicinal plants, then I can attempt to do so on the next level."

Hearing this, Meng Hao immediately nodded his head, took a deep breath, and continued imprinting.

"In order to give the people on the outside more of a reason to listen to my lectures, in order to earn more merit points... I'm going to go all out!"

"Just wait until I get out of here! I'll definitely raise my prices! Two hours, two merit points!" His eyes shone with determination, which seemed to affect his divine sense, making it even faster than before.

1,000,000. 10,000,000. 30,000,000....

Meng Hao continuously imprinted the medicinal plants that appeared in his divine sense. The feeling he was experiencing made him sigh emotionally. If he'd had a skill like this when he'd taken the Imperial examinations that year, then he would surely have become a high official in the State of Zhao.

"Although, not for very long," he thought. "Several hundred years have passed since then. If I hadn't started practicing cultivation, I would be long dead." He shook his head, sighed, and continued to imprint.

The tome couldn't even be seen clearly. The pages flipped by so quickly that the whole book seemed frozen in eternity, almost unmoving.

40,000,000. 50,000,000. 60,000,000...

Time passed. To Meng Hao, it felt like he wasn't expending any energy at all. Furthermore, his mastery of plants and vegetation seemed to be growing even more firm.

70,000,000. 80,000,000. 90,000,000....

In the end, Meng Hao let out a sharp breath and slammed the book shut.  
100,000,000!!

The Medicine Pavilion trembled, and boundless light shone out in all directions. A staircase appeared, which Meng Hao climbed, filled with anticipation.

Everyone outside the Medicine Pavilion looked on as brilliant light from the fourth level spread out in all directions.

"He passed the fourth level!"

"If he passed the fourth level, that basically means he's a tier 4 apothecary! If his pill concocting skill is just as strong, he'll be a tier 4 alchemist!"

The crowd was in quite a commotion. Of course, there were some people with looks of disdain on their faces. In their view, any tier 4 alchemist could pass the fourth level, which meant that Meng Hao hadn't accomplished anything unusual. At the most, he had done something special on the first level only.

However, before the discussions could finish, a beam of light suddenly shot out from the fifth level. It flew into the air and then began to ripple out.

Shockingly, within those ripples, appeared... a screen!

Meng Hao was visible within the screen, walking up a staircase into the fifth level.

This scene caused the surrounding 100,000 spectators to stare in shock. Even the three tier 8 Elders were astonished.

The screen was so huge it seemed to fill the sky. There were many people in the Dao of Alchemy Division who hadn't come to the Medicine Pavilion but, after catching sight of the huge screen, were suddenly curious, and began to head over at top speed.

One of them was the old woman, the tier 7 alchemist who had disrupted Meng Hao's lectures. Shocked, she flew in from the outer mountains.

Everyone around the Medicine Pavilion began to discuss the unprecedented appearance of the screen. They were all very excited.

"What's going on? I've never heard of a screen appearing when people entered the Medicine Pavilion."

"Could it be that that this is a new divine ability manifested by the Medicine Pavilion now that the rules have been changed?"

"Hahaha! This is great! We'll be able to clearly see how Fang Hao passes through the fifth level. This is much better than before!"

The three tier 8 Elders stared in shock and then exchanged suspicious glances.

It was strictly prohibited to reveal what happened inside the Medicine Pavilion. Even though some people might secretly find out some details, they would keep things low key and not spread the information around. That was especially true of the fifth level and higher.

"Pill Elder is in control of the Medicine Pavilion, could it be that he has some secret plan?" Even as the three old men transmitted a discussion, everything around them went quiet. On the screen, it was possible to see Meng Hao, who had just stepped foot off of the stairs and onto... the fifth level.

At the same time, on the stone stele located outside of the Medicine Pavilion, Meng Hao's name appeared on the fourth level, yet again first on the list!

# Chapter 915: Striving for the Pinnacle of Perfection

In the instant that he entered the fifth level, Meng Hao stopped in his tracks and looked around. Then he took a deep breath, and his eyes began to shine with a brilliant light.

He began to tremble, a trembling that originated from the excitement in his heart, and seemed very difficult to control. Meng Hao would never act like this in a life-or-death battle, but this was an examination, a test of his skill with plants and vegetation.

He truly wished to know the extent of his skill. Therefore, he wanted the examination to get harder, and for there to be more medicinal plants involved.

As of this moment what he saw was... an enormous fifth level, filled with glittering lights and seemingly infinite medicinal ingredients. There were plants of all kinds and types, and even some things that bore the semblance of wild animals.

From the look of it, this level had ten times as many items as the previous level!

“1,000,000,000....” Meng Hao thought, his eyes shining as he looked around. As of this moment, he now had a much deeper understanding of the Fang Clan’s Dao of alchemy. These 1,000,000,000 medicinal ingredients were essentially anything that could be counted as medicinal that had appeared in the Ninth Mountain and Sea throughout tens of thousands of years of history.

These items weren’t just limited to plants and vegetation!

They were not grafted plants either. Everything was whole. Meng Hao glanced over them and saw tens of thousands of items that he didn’t recognize.

He began to breathe heavily. These 1,000,000,000 medicinal resources suddenly superimposed over each other in front of Meng Hao to

transform into an enormous ancient tome that was as tall as a person.

Yet again, it was the Classic of Plants and Vegetation.

However, underneath the title of the book were the words ‘volume one.’

“This must be the full first volume of the Classic of Plants and Vegetation!” thought Meng Hao, his heart pounding. “1,000,000,000 medicinal plants. The Fang Clan’s Dao of alchemy truly is boundless and profound!”

The crowds in the outside world were equally shocked.

More and more cultivators were showing up, and when they saw the image on the screen, their jaws dropped.

“Is that... the fifth level?!”

“1,000,000,000 medicinal plants.... The only way to ever be promoted to a tier 5 alchemist is to pass this level! Any tier 5 alchemist in the Dao of Alchemy Division is incredibly famous and powerful in the outside world!!”

As the buzz of conversation filled the air outside, an archaic voice could be heard filling the fifth level.

“1,000,000,000 medicinal plants. Identify the first 100,000,000 in the Classic of Plants and Vegetation to pass this level. One mistake means failure.”

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered with a bright light. Expression solemn, he slowly walked forward. As far as he was concerned, this was the first time the test had actually seemed difficult. Even his first cursory scan confirmed that there were tens of thousands of items that he wasn’t familiar with.

One mistake in those first 100,000,000, and he would fail.

“It seems I’ve underestimated the Fang Clan’s Dao of alchemy,” he thought. Expression serious, he reached out, placed his hand on the ancient book, and sent his divine sense into it.

Immediately, countless medicinal plants appeared within his divine

sense, which he immediately began to imprint. The pages of the ancient book began to flip at high speed. In the blink of an eye, several thousand pages had already been turned over.

None of the observers had ever seen anything like this before. Now, though, the scene was playing out right in front of them, clearly visible on the screen. Tens of thousands of observers on the outside looked on in shock. Deathly silence filled the air, and all minds reeled as they watched Meng Hao and the ancient book.

The apprentice alchemists' eyes went wide, and as for the full alchemists, they began to pant. Even the tier 5, 6, and 7 alchemists were stunned.

The three tier 8 Elders gasped. The scene playing out left even them truly amazed.

They even began to wonder whether they could make the tome's pages flip so quickly. From the look of things, Meng Hao was simply a natural born genius when it came to plants and vegetation.

"Just how familiar is he with plants and vegetation? He doesn't even need to think! He recognizes them the instant he looks at them!"

"His foundation in plants and vegetation really is terrifying. With whom did he study the Dao of alchemy to lay such a foundation!?"

"This is unbelievable!"

As the audience's reaction swelled into an uproar, Meng Hao was inside, concentrating solely on the contents of the Classic of Plants and Vegetation. Time passed, and he identified more and more of the tome's contents, faster and faster.

10,000,000. 30,000,000. 50,000,000....

It didn't take long before he had identified 90,000,000. The spectators observed with rapt attention. It was at this point that, all of a sudden, Meng Hao stopped turning the pages of the ancient book. There on the page in front of him, a heart had appeared.

It was a wooden heart, parched and cracked. A few tiny flowers could be seen growing out of it, and when Meng Hao saw it, he stood there quietly.

The alchemists in the world outside were watching the screen closely. Some of the tier 5 alchemists looked at the wooden heart, then frowned and began to wrack their brains to try and identify it. Some of the tier 6 alchemists hesitated, and were unable to determine with certainty exactly what it was.

Even the old woman who had stolen Meng Hao's business looked on with flickering thoughtfulness.

Only the three tier 8 alchemists didn't seem fazed. They exchanged glances and began to transmit a conversation.

"Fang Hao really got unlucky. In the fifth level, there are ten types of medicinal plants that have long since become extinct. They are plants no outsider would ever know about. Even we didn't find out about them until we reached tier 8."

"He definitely won't be able to identify the Woodbear Heart."

"The test is over. What a pity. However, he can try again in a month. Considering the momentum he built up before, as long as he doesn't run into a medicine plant he's never seen before, he shouldn't have much of a problem passing the fifth level."

"Although, I find it strange that this particular medicinal plant would appear in the first 100,000,000. Yet, there it is."

The three old men were then lost in thought, and didn't converse any further.

Back on the fifth level, Meng Hao looked at the image in front of him, muttering. He didn't recognize the item, and in fact had never seen it before. At first glance, if you didn't know it was wood, you would probably think it was an actual heart.

Meng Hao extended his right hand and pointed at the page. Immediately, glittering light rose up, and an illusory version of the wooden heart appeared in front of him, then rapidly grew very clear.

He could even sense a faint medicinal aroma emanating out. After inhaling deeply, he closed his eyes and began to make some mental deductions. Although he didn't recognize this wooden heart, he was still able to use his skill with plants and vegetation to analyze its medicinal properties.

After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, Meng Hao's eyes snapped open, and he began to make an imprint with divine sense.

"Effective against chills that enter the body. Is filled with rich spiritual energy, and the power of fire and wood. Contains 9,137 variations. Can be grown using Spirit Extract, and when it reaches maturity, it contains the potential to materialize Immortal qi. When using it to concoct medicinal pills for the Immortal Realm, depending on which variations are used, and which of those is the main ingredient, then, regardless of which medicinal pill is created, as long as you add Apefever Flower, its medicinal strength can be increased by ten percent!" Meng Hao quickly finished imprinting the information. Although he didn't know the exact name of this medicinal item, the name... wasn't actually important.

After finishing the imprint of information, the wooden heart vanished from the page, to be replaced by a block of text that thoroughly described the plant's properties and growth characteristics. The description was incredibly detailed, including information about medicinal effects, details vital to using the ingredient to concoct medicinal pills, descriptions about how to harvest it, and other information.

When Meng Hao saw all the information, he took a deep breath. Although he had determined many correct bits of information about the wooden heart, his information had not been as detailed as the final description. He quickly committed the information to memory.

Then he waved his hand and continued to flip through the pages.

When the spectators saw what had happened, they were shocked. Even the three tier 8 Elders gasped, and stared with wide, astonished eyes.

"He most likely has never seen that Woodbear Heart before. And yet, he just smelled it a few times and then was able to explain its medicinal

properties!"

"What an incredible Dao of alchemy! What profound skill with plants and vegetation!"

Deep within the Dao of Alchemy Division was a mountain that was considered to be a sacred location. This was where Fang Danyun resided, the Dao of Alchemy Division's only tier 9 alchemist!

He had a full head of white hair, and as he sat there cross-legged on the mountain peak, his eyes slowly opened. He then gazed in the direction of the Medicine Pavilion, his eyes shining with a gleam of curiosity.

"I wonder which Grandmaster of the Dao of Alchemy trained a disciple like this.... His skill with plants and vegetation has already reached incredible heights. He came from Planet South Heaven.... I haven't ever heard of any Grandmaster on Planet South Heaven who could develop such a talented pupil." The old man sighed.

"Although, Planet South Heaven is shrouded in mystery. It's possible this kid... has had some unique opportunities." He continued to look at the Medicine Pavilion in silence.

Back on the fifth level, Meng Hao continued to rapidly flip through the tome's pages. They moved so fast that the entire book seemed like one connected piece. Soon, he had completely imprinted ten percent of the 1,000,000,000 items inside. However, Meng Hao didn't stop there.

His mind was completely absorbed in the book, to the extent that he forgot his original reason for drawing everyone's attention to him here. Gradually, the ten percent became twenty, then thirty....

After completing fifty percent, his speed gradually slowed. He would occasionally encounter medicinal plants that he didn't recognize, but in those cases, he actually got excited.

He wanted to see more medicinal plants that he had never seen before. That was the only way for him to experience the sensation of groping for the correct answer. That was when he could truly unleash his skill with plants and vegetation, analyzing the item from various angles and using

his best judgement to determine, not necessarily the name, but rather, enough information to imprint it with divine sense. When the full description appeared, he would commit it to memory. He was now getting the feeling that attempting to pass through the Medicine Pavilion was really helping him to learn a lot more about plants and vegetation.

Meng Hao's skill with plants and vegetation had reached an incredible level. By now, there were few types of plants or vegetation within the Ninth Mountain and Sea that he was unaware of. Every single new one that he encountered pushed his skill to an even more refined extent.

Sixty percent. Seventy percent. Eighty percent....

Meng Hao wasn't aware of how much time had passed. However, the closer he got to the end of the book, the more medicinal plants he encountered that he was unfamiliar with, which required even more time. And yet, his excitement only grew.

Outside of the Medicine Pavilion, there were now nearly 200,000 cultivators clustered around, watching the screen with blank expressions. The excitement on Meng Hao's face was clear, and the more medicinal plants he identified, the more everyone's minds reeled.

"Inhuman.... When it comes to plants and vegetation, this Fang Hao is a beast!"

"Don't tell me he was actually a medicinal plant in a past life? Otherwise, how else could he be so inhuman!!"

"The fifth level has 1,000,000,000 medicinal plants, and from the way he's going, it looks like he's going to identify them all...."

"I just realized something! The merit points I paid to hear him lecture about plants and vegetation were worth it! Definitely worth it!!"

# Chapter 916: Lotuses With Each Step!

As time passed, a few people noticed that under normal circumstances, the fifth level would have already concluded. However, Meng Hao was still plugging away.

Apparently, the time limit had been cancelled, leaving Meng Hao free to spend as much time as he wanted there.

Slowly, the number of plants and vegetation he identified increased. Eventually, three days went by.

Meng Hao could never have imagined that he would need to spend so much time and energy on the fifth level. His eyes were bloodshot, and he felt that he was on the verge of mental exhaustion. However, he was still excited and his spirits were high.

Among the final twenty percent were many types of of the plants and vegetation that Meng Hao didn't recognize. Each one required a great deal of time and energy to analyze and judge before he could identify some clues that would lead him into further levels of investigation. Eventually, he would get enough information to be able to create a divine sense imprint.

Detailed introduction on the plant would appear every time he made his imprint. That was what he truly looked forward to; he was like a dried-up sponge, just waiting to absorb boundless knowledge about plants and vegetation.

Three more days passed.... None of the audience members left, but instead settled themselves cross-legged in the area. Were these ordinary cultivators, they would probably find the affair boring. However, they were alchemists and apprentice alchemists, people who had devoted their lives to the Dao of alchemy. Watching Meng Hao's examination on the screen enabled them to see medicinal plants that they might otherwise never be able to see, which was an incredible opportunity.

Everyone was imprinting the information into their minds, studying and learning.

More and more people joined the crowd. On the tenth day, there were nearly 300,000 people present, densely packed together as far as the eye could see.

On the fifth level, a tremor ran through Meng Hao's body as he woke up from his reverie of plants and vegetation. There in front of him was the final page of the ancient book.

At that moment, all of his exhaustion from the past days enveloped him, and his head felt swollen and began to pulse with pain. To him, these past ten days left him feeling more worn out than when he had fought the three black-robed Immortal Realm cultivators.

And yet, he did not close his eyes. He examined the tome, upon which his results for this level were revealed.

He hadn't paid any attention to the results for the first four levels, because he was absolutely confident that he hadn't made any mistakes. However, on this fifth level, he wasn't so confident.

"I missed more than 200...." he murmured, "all of them in the final 300,000,000 plants." Finally he closed his eyes and rotated his cultivation base to restore his composure

He wasn't happy with his results at all. However, he had been introduced to many, many unfamiliar medicinal plants on this level, and his skill with plants and vegetation had increased by a whole level.

To the outside audience, the results were completely shocking, and that included the three tier 8 Elders. Everyone gasped, and then a huge uproar occurred.

"1,000,000,000 plants and he only missed a bit over 200.... He's definitely inhuman!!"

"Any tier 5 alchemist would pass by identifying the first 100,000,000. But Fang Hao required more of himself! He went through all 1,000,000,000. From the look on his face, he seems a bit disappointed."

The sound of the conversations among the 300,000 audience members was like thunder that spread out in all directions, and was heard by quite a

few of the Dao of Alchemy Division's apprentice alchemists and full alchemists. The ground trembled and the clouds in the sky shattered.

The three tier 8 alchemists wore forced smiles on their faces as they exchanged glances.

"When I attempted the fifth level that year, I couldn't have done that."

"Forget about back then. Even right now, we're probably the only people who could. Even the tier 7 alchemists probably couldn't pull something like that off."

Bright beams of light appeared off in the distance as more tier 8 alchemists appeared. Of course, no one present could see them. As they arrived, they looked at the Medicine Pavilion... and their eyes were filled with anticipation.

"Finally, our Dao of Alchemy Division has... a truly Chosen member of the clan!"

Back on the fifth level of the Medicine Pavilion, Meng Hao opened his eyes. Much of his tiredness and exhaustion had vanished. He took a deep breath, rose to his feet, and stepped forward toward the ancient tome. Then, he clasped hands and bowed deeply.

"Many thanks for bestowing me with such kindness!" he said softly. Each and every word rose up from the depths of his heart. To cultivators of the Dao of alchemy, Meng Hao's experience just now was truly like being gifted with an amazing Dao.

The tome vanished after Meng Hao bowed, and a flight of stairs appeared up ahead of him. At the same time, his name moved from its previous position up to the fifth level, where, as before, it was now in first place on the list!

His expression was somber as he strode forward toward the steps and began to climb up to the sixth level. When he arrived, what he saw absolutely nothing.

There were no medicinal plants, there was no tome, there was no mist. There wasn't even any light. There was only complete darkness.

Everything seemed empty, as if nothing at all existed there.

Meng Hao gaped in shock, and he wasn't the only one. The people outside were also staring at the screen, astonished.

The only ones who didn't were the alchemists who had previously been on the sixth level. Their faces were grave as they stared closely at the screen. The tier 7 old woman looked on, her face grim. Now that she had seen how inhuman he was, she regretted what she had done earlier. She had offended him, but she also knew that there was little she could do about it now, and so she might as well stick to her guns.

After all, from her perspective, he might be inhuman, but he couldn't compare to the people who had sought out her help in the clan. The compensation they had provided was incredible.

"I might not be able to do what he did in the fifth level," she thought to herself, "but that doesn't matter. As an alchemist, you don't need to have such breadth and depth of knowledge regarding plants and vegetation. It's enough to be intimately familiar with the ones that you do know."

"I failed dozens of times at this level before finally passing. There's no way this Fang Hao will succeed on his first try. After all, the sixth level is completely different from the first five." She smiled coldly.

The nearby tier 5, 6, and 7 alchemists were shaking their heads. All of them had challenged the sixth level of the Medicine Pavilion, so they knew how difficult it was.

"This level is a watershed," commented one of the tier 8 Elders, his voice light.

"The first five levels require sufficient knowledge of plants and vegetation. The last four levels are completely different, and it only gets harder and harder."

On the stone stele outside of the Medicine Pavilion, hundreds of thousands of names could be seen on the first level. There were only 100,000 on the second level, 50,000 on the third level, 20,000 on the fourth level, and less than 10,000 on the fifth level.

As for the sixth level, only 5,000 people had ever passed it.

The seventh level had 1,000 names and the eighth level only had a bit more than 200. The last level, the ninth... only had 10.

It mustn't be forgotten that those numbers represented the accumulation of all the generations that had existed since the founding of the Fang Clan's Dao of Alchemy Division. From this, it was easy to imagine how difficult the Medicine Pavilion was.

Furthermore, whenever anyone passed the sixth level, the first thing that would happen would be that a Dao Bell would appear in the sky above the ancestral mansion. No outsider could see that bell, and when it tolled, only the members of the Fang Clan on Planet East Victory could hear it in their minds.

That bell represented true honor and glory!

Meng Hao stood on the Medicine Pavilion's sixth level, looking around at the pitch black around him. Even after sending his divine sense out, he could sense nothing but darkness. After hesitating for a moment, he took a step forward.

As soon as his foot landed, he stopped in place and cocked his head. His expression flickered.

Just now, he hadn't seen anything within the darkness, but had been able to smell the fragrance of medicinal plants. Some of the aromas were faint, some were dense. They all melded together to fill the entire area, and seemed to grow even thicker further on.

It was at this point that the archaic voice echoed out through the sixth level.

"Aroma Scrying is one of the realms of skill with plants and vegetation. You may take up to 100 steps. With every step, you will smell the fragrance of different medicinal plants.

"Determine what each plant is based on its smell, and imprint the information into the darkness. One mistake means failure."

Meng Hao wasn't the only one who could hear the voice. The audience of more than 300,000 in the outside world could also hear it, and it caused their faces to flicker with expressions of disbelief.

"How... how could you possibly provide all the answers! No wonder this sixth level is considered so difficult. Aroma Scrying is virtually a legendary realm!"

"I never thought that the test would involve Aroma Scrying! I heard about this realm when I first became an apprentice alchemist. To think that over all the past tens of thousands of years in the Fang Clan's Dao of Alchemy Division, 5,000 or so people have actually passed this level!"

The outside world was in a huge commotion. Virtually everyone took this test to be excessively difficult. It was in a completely different league than the previous five levels.

The tier 7 old woman chuckled coldly. As she thought back to the difficulty of this level, she actually felt frightened.

"The seventh level is even harder, for any alchemist," she whispered to herself. "And then there's the hell-like eighth level!"

Back on the sixth level, Meng Hao began to breathe deeply, allowing the fragrances of countless medicinal plants to enter his nose. Immediately, his mind exploded as images of numerous medicinal plants appeared, each one of which was associated with one of the fragrances he had detected.

There were no less than 10,000, but in the blink of an eye, his divine sense swept out, and the images of medicinal plants began to appear in the dark void around him.

Furthermore, the outline of an illusory lotus appeared beneath his feet.

He took a second step, and once again breathed in deeply. A tremor ran through his body, and another 10,000 images appeared around him. A second lotus appeared beneath him.

One step after another, and another....

Meng Hao proceeded forward, and with each step he took, he breathed in deeply. Afterward, numerous medicinal plants would appear around him, causing the pitch-black world to be lit up by what looked like a procession of blazing lanterns.

Furthermore, lotuses continued to appear beneath his feet.

After taking 69 steps, 69 lotuses had appeared, and he was surrounded by millions of shining medicinal plants.

To everyone who was watching, Meng Hao almost looked like a holy being, surrounded by swirling plants, lotuses blooming with each step he took.

“Lotuses with each step!!” thought the old woman. Her eyes were wide, and she was panting. She well knew how difficult the sixth level was, and also knew that the only way a lotus would appear would be if he correctly identified the fragrance of every single medicinal plant, and imprinted it correctly.

When she had passed the sixth level, she had only caused three lotuses to appear. But Meng Hao... shockingly... created lotuses with each step!

She wasn’t the only shocked one. All of the alchemists who were familiar with the sixth level were shaken. They watched Meng Hao on the screen, and the image they saw would eternally be imprinted into their minds. It was an unforgettable scene that they would never forget for the rest of their lives.

# Chapter 917: Climbing Higher!

The handful of tier 8 alchemists in the area were visibly moved. They looked at Meng Hao on the screen, and their eyes shone with both praise and hope.

The Fang Clan's Dao of Alchemy Division was not a sect, but rather, a division of the clan. All of the alchemists and apprentice alchemists were clan members, and their sense of clan pride and honor was at the core of what had kept the clan from falling into ruin over the ages.

Actually, merit points were one of several methods that kept clan members from becoming estranged from the clan.

Of course, the Dao of Alchemy Division hoped for a truly Chosen alchemy cultivator to appear, to arouse interest in the Dao of alchemy and to bring glory to the Fang Clan's Dao of Alchemy Division once again. However, despite the passage of many years, although other divisions of the clan had produced Chosen, the Dao of Alchemy Division had remained a quiet and desolate place. Chosen alchemy cultivators were something that could only be happened upon, and never sought out.

There were some who had the talent for it, but were not the type who were inclined to study the Dao of alchemy, and instead preferred to focus on cultivation. People like that believed that the road to power would only be obstructed by focusing on other practices.

Today, though, these tier 8 Elders finally had a bit of hope.

On the sixth level of the Medicine Pavilion, Meng Hao was taking his 70th step. In that instant, he deeply inhaled the dense odor of plants and vegetation. His nose and brain exploded with soundless rumbling, and a tremor ran through him. All of the blood in his body suddenly began to circulate in reverse.

Images of medicinal plants began to float up in his mind, endless varieties of them. This type of Aroma Scrying did not just test someone's skill with plants and vegetation, it also tested instincts!

To be able to know how many types of medicinal plants there were by simply sniffing, without thinking about it too much.... This was something... that could really only be done by instinct, and by being incredibly familiar with all sorts of plants and vegetation.

This higher level of skill with plants and vegetation was like the Instantaneous Formula Scrying of the Dao of alchemy. They were actually two branches of the same skill and the same realm. 1

The level of difficulty of this sixth level examination was such that the requirement to pass was that the test-taker successfully take twenty steps. With each of those steps, ten or more misjudgements were tolerated before that step would be counted as a failure.

The reason for the rules being set in such a fashion was because this level was simply too difficult.

Therefore, it was easy to imagine how Meng Hao, who had already taken 70 steps, with lotuses blooming for each step, would be so incredibly shocking to all the alchemists outside who understood how difficult the test was. They could hardly believe their eyes.

71 steps. 72 steps. 73 steps.... Meng Hao didn't pause. He kept moving forward, heading further and further in. The aromas of plants and vegetation grew stronger, and were filled with even more types.

And yet, Meng Hao continued to produce... lotuses with each step.

It wasn't until he reached the 80th step that he finally started to slow down, although to the alchemist watching outside, it still looked fast.

81, 82, 83.... With each step he took, the surrounding void of darkness glittered more and more brightly. Botanical lanterns shone with scintillating light, until the entire sixth level now appeared to be brightly lit.

Having taken his 90th step, he only had 10 more steps to go. He was now moving even slower, as if these ten steps were difficult even for him. Each step took a lot more thought, which was clear to the audience.

His instincts now felt clouded, and now he needed to spend more time

analyzing and deducing each aroma. It was only after painstaking examination that he was finally able to identify all of the medicinal plants.

The outside world was filled with silence. 300,000 spectators were all staring at Meng Hao on the screen. Behind him was a path of lotuses, and he was surrounded by endless numbers of botanical lamps.

As of this moment, Meng Hao was like an Immortal of plants and vegetation. He was the focus of all attention; even that old woman looked on silently.

91, 92, 93... each step now took approximately two hours. Each time, lotuses would bloom, and bright lanterns flickered everywhere.

The 95th step took him six hours; he stood there motionless within the boundless aroma before he finally imprinted all of the plants and vegetation within it.

The 96th step took twenty hours.

The 97th took two days.

By the 98th step, Meng Hao had long since lost track of time. Everyone in the outside world was staring closely at the screen. Five days later, he stepped forward again, and another lotus bloomed.

The 99th step took ten days, but yet again, a lotus bloomed, and the crowds went wild.

By now, approximately 400,000 people had gathered in the area. All of them were breathing heavily as they waited for Meng Hao... to take the final step.

The 100th step!

There on the sixth level, Meng Hao's eyes were closed. He had no idea how many steps he had taken. Without even thinking about it, he took another step forward. Rumbling sounds filled his mind, and his body trembled.

Meng Hao was panting. Every imprint he made forced him to sift through a blur of obfuscating information, and required much analysis.

More time passed. Everyone in the outside world waited. Three days. Seven days. Ten days....

Finally, twenty days passed!!

The outside world was abuzz; no one had ever been able to spend so much time testing inside of the Medicine pavilion. Meng Hao had already taken nearly two months to pass from the first level all the way to the sixth.

Five more days passed, when suddenly, all of the innumerable botanical lamps in the sixth level exploded with scintillating light. Beneath Meng Hao's foot... appeared the 100th lotus!

His eyes opened, and his body shook. Blood sprayed from his mouth. This level was so difficult that Meng Hao only passed it by shedding blood, sweat, and tears. The last step had pushed him to the limits of his skill with plants and vegetation, which, in the end, had enabled him to pass with perfect marks!

Up ahead, the innumerable botanical lamps merged together to form a staircase of vines, something that seemed suitable only for a sovereign of plants and vegetation.

The seventh level was now open!

At the same time, from the view of the outside world, the sixth level began to shine with boundless light. The sky went dim, and all darkness was dispelled. The Dao of Alchemy Division was now the focus of all eyes.

Meng Hao's name appeared on the stone stele, in the first position on the list of names for the sixth level!

The audience was abuzz.

"He... passed the sixth level! Lotuses blossomed with each step! One hundred steps, one hundred lotuses!"

"Could it be that this Fang Hao is going to bring about a renaissance in the Dao of Alchemy Division!?"

"Just wait until he's finished here in the medicine pavilion! I'm definitely

going to go listen to his lectures on plants and vegetation!!”

Meanwhile, an enormous, ancient bell appeared in the air above the Fang Clan’s ancestral mansion. From the look of it, the bell appeared to have seen the passage of ages. It was engraved with mountains and rivers, and as soon as it appeared, it rang loud and sharp.

The sound echoed out through Planet East Victory, to the ears of anyone with Fang blood in their veins. Outsiders could not hear, but the Fang Clan members could!!

The Fang Clan was shaken. Everyone in the Dao of Alchemy Division who was not already at the Medicine Pavilion was aroused. Sensing the light shining up from the Medicine Pavilion, many of them immediately flew in that direction.

Everyone in the ancestral mansion was equally shaken. First, there was the light shining up from the Dao of Alchemy Division, and then there was the bell. All Fang Clan members were shocked, and many flew toward the Dao of Alchemy Division to see what exactly was going on.

The Grand Elder stood silently in the main temple, his expression complex, and even somewhat confused.

“Did I... make a mistake?” he murmured. “No, I didn’t. Everything is for the clan. Everything I have done is according to the rules of the clan!!” The Grand Elder took a deep breath, but he still seemed to be at a loss. He looked over at the Dao of Alchemy Division, and a fierce glint could be seen in his eyes.

Meng Hao sat cross-legged on the sixth level of the Medicine Pavilion. After meditating for a period of time, he opened his eyes, which were still slightly bloodshot.

“From the difficulty of the fifth and sixth levels, I can see the boundlessness of the Fang Clan’s Dao of alchemy,” he murmured. “I made a lot of mistakes on the fifth level, and the sixth level was actually even harder. It’s only because I absorbed the Resurrection Lily that I can have such instincts with plants and vegetation!”

“Therefore... my ability with Aroma Scrying is actually a bit of a cheap trick.

“This seventh level will definitely be even harder than all the others!” With that, he stood up, and his eyes flashed with a glimmer of obsession. When he had started in the Medicine Pavilion, his goal had been to amaze the world and become an overnight celebrity. It had all been for the merit points. Now, however, he was doing it to improve his skill with plants and vegetation.

He wasn’t just concerned with passing the level; he wanted to pass every level at the pinnacle. That was the only way for him to increase his skill with plants and vegetation.

He took a deep breath and began to walk up the stairs.

At the same time that he set foot on the seventh level, all of the hundreds of thousands of spectators outside were looking on. Compared to the sixth level, the seventh level didn’t seem very extraordinary. The only things that were visible were two enormous books.

One of them was, of course, the first volume of the Classic of Plants and Vegetation, with its 1,000,000,000 medicinal plants.

The second was empty. It apparently had no content whatsoever.

Even as Meng Hao laid eyes on the two books, the archaic voice rang out through the seventh level.

“Using grafting techniques and your knowledge of the mutual augmentation and suppression between different types of plants and vegetation, you must create... 10,000 unique medicinal plants. That is the threshold to pass this level. If you wish to pass the level with perfect marks, you must create 100,000.”

Meng Hao’s heart trembled. He took a deep breath, and his eyes began to shine with bright light.

“Finally... a level like this!” He knew that having accumulated so much knowledge regarding plants and vegetation, the time had eventually come to step into a new realm. It was a realm which used the principles of

mutual augmentation and suppression, along with grafting techniques, to create medicinal plants that belonged to him and him alone.

Using medicinal plants like that to concoct pills would make it very difficult for others to identify the pill formula. Even if they could, it would still be very difficult to create the necessary medicinal plant ingredients. This was also a higher realm of pill concocting.

Back when Meng Hao was in the Violet Fate Sect, he had encountered such things, but not very often. The ancient Demon Immortal Sect's Dao of alchemy also touched on such matters, but he had never had a chance to systematically study it.

Now, he settled his qi and calmed his mind, then stepped forward toward the tome and closed his eyes to think.

All of the people in the outside world who had never heard of what the seventh level was like, now gasped. Actually, according to the requirements of the Fang Clan's Dao of alchemy, alchemists began to explore grafting techniques beginning in tier 5. In order to become a tier 7 alchemist, it was necessary to create 10,000 personally grafted medicinal plants.

Among the hundreds of thousands of spectators, the tier 6 and 7 alchemists all began to whisper among themselves.

"I wonder if Meng Hao will be able to pass the seventh level.... How many kinds of grafted medicinal plants will he create!?"

"It's going to be difficult for him to pass. No one has ever done so on the first try. Not even his excellency Pill Elder was able to; it took him four tries."

"Only with a profound knowledge base, and significant experience with grafting plants and vegetation, can someone even attempt the seventh level, let alone pass it."

1. Meng Hao learned Instantaneous Formula Scrying in chapter 218, and it was mentioned a few times after that in chapters 244, 252, 253 and 254.

# Chapter 918: Boundless Dao of Alchemy!

On the seventh level of the Medicine Pavilion, Meng Hao stood in front of the tomes for the time it takes an incense stick to burn, thinking. Then, his eyes opened, and he waved his hand, causing the Classic of Plants and Vegetation to rapidly flip open to a certain page. Instantly, a medicinal plant appeared and floated up into the air.

More pages flipped in quick succession, nine of them, and nine more medicinal plants appeared. Meng Hao made a grasping motion, causing all nine plants to appear on the blank tome's first empty page.

Next, the plants followed his line of thought. Some were stripped of their bark, others had flowers removed. In the end, they formed together within Meng Hao's divine sense, where he used the techniques of mutual augmentation and suppression to graft them together.

The medicinal plant on the first page glittered brightly, whereupon the book seemed to analyze and judge it. After the blink of an eye, the page slowly turned, indicating that Meng Hao had successfully created his first medicinal plant.

He once again waved his left hand over the Classic of Plants and Vegetation, pulling out more medicinal plants and using his divine sense to transform and graft them together, continuing to create different medicinal plants according to his desires.

Time passed. To cultivators who didn't understand the Dao of alchemy, this examination seemed somewhat boring. However, to the cultivators of the Dao of Alchemy Division, it was an unprecedented opportunity for good fortune.

Even the tier 7 alchemists looked on with strange lights glowing in their eyes. As Meng Hao created his medicinal plants, they gained more enlightenment, and were continuously shocked. In fact, their own skill with plants and vegetation was slowly creeping upward.

"I can't believe that you can make cold-type plants that way.... After adding nine hot elements, the original formula was to add one cold

element. But instead, he added nine cold elements. According to the law of mutual augmentation and suppression, you would think that the result would be neutral. And yet, the result is like that!"

"That Moonspirit Flower can actually turn into Sunsplendor Leaf through grafting! What an outrageous line of thinking, and yet, it works!"

Even the old woman stared with wide eyes. Subconsciously, she began to imitate Meng Hao, and her own skill with plants and vegetation gradually began to increase.

The tier 5 and 6 alchemists were incredibly excited. When it came to plant and vegetation grafting, they were just in the initial stages of learning. As they watched Meng Hao at work, they committed everything they saw to memory.

To them, this was an extremely rare opportunity.

As for the lower level alchemists, this was a realm far removed from them. However, they all understood that if they wanted to travel far along the path of the Dao of alchemy, then they would eventually have to learn how to graft plants and vegetation. Therefore, they also did as much as they could to take advantage of the situation.

The apprentice alchemists were even less clear about what was happening. However, seeing the intent expressions on the faces of the higher level alchemists, they also realized that what Meng Hao was currently doing with grafting techniques was astonishing. Therefore, they kept their eyes glued on Meng Hao and did their best to try to remember what sort of grafting techniques he used.

The world outside the Medicine Pavilion was completely quiet. Even the two old men who stood guard outside had opened their eyes and were looking at the screen up in midair.

The tier 8 alchemists stood there silently, watching Meng Hao and observing his grafting techniques. All of them were filled with anticipation.

Meng Hao once again lost track of time as he absorbed himself in the

grafting of plants and vegetation. His left hand sped over the first volume of the Classic of Plants and Vegetation, seemingly flipping pages nonstop.

Time passed. Meng Hao created more and more medicinal plants. 10. 100. 1,000....

Seven days later, Meng Hao finally created 10,000 medicinal plants. He took a deep breath, but he wasn't finished. Instead, he focused inwardly for a moment, experiencing a similar feeling regarding plants and vegetation to that which he felt when practicing cultivation. He could clearly tell that as he created more medicinal plants, his understanding of plants and vegetation grew more refined.

Although it had been a long time since he had concocted medicinal pills, he could also sense that his pill concocting skill... was becoming stronger.

"My hand is the pill furnace, and I will blend all Heaven and Earth together in my palm to create an almighty medicinal pill!" His eyes shone with a light that originated from his Dao, with his Dao of alchemy. With this Dao, he could corroborate his heart, and then use that heart to concoct pills.

Seven more days passed. By now, Meng Hao had created more than 15,000 medicinal plants. Everyone outside was shaken, and their admiration for Meng Hao had reached the pinnacle.

Even the old woman had to ask herself whether her own skill with plants and vegetation was equal to Meng Hao's. In the end, she had to sigh and admit that people like Meng Hao were exactly what the Dao of Alchemy Division lacked, and in fact, desperately needed.

As for her... if she continued to comply with the wishes of those in the main clan who wanted her to target Meng Hao, perhaps she would fall out of harmony with the Dao of Alchemy itself.

"Forget it," she thought, her eyes shining with determination. "After all... I am a member of the Dao of Alchemy Division!" She took a deep breath, and dispelled all thoughts of targeting Meng Hao. All of a sudden, it felt as if a great weight had been lifted off of her. She focused on the screen, and on contemplating plants and vegetation.

15,000. 20,000. 30,000....

A month passed by, during which time Meng Hao created 30,000 medicinal plants. More people gathered outside. By now, there were over 500,000, spread out in all directions.

Everyone was watching Meng Hao create medicinal plants. Occasionally, people seemed to go wild with joy at what they were seeing, and at other times they looked confused. However, in the end, everyone watching was able to gain something.

Unfortunately, Meng Hao was completely absorbed in what he was doing, and had no idea what was going on outside. If he did know, he might well have gone nuts. After all, this was a prime opportunity... to charge merit points.

If at this moment he stepped out of the Medicine Pavilion and bellowed out that he demanded payment, virtually everyone in the audience would instantly pay what he asked.

From the moment he had entered the first level until now, a full four months had passed. Although cultivators had a long lifespan, and often a single meditation session might last years, to them, four months would still seem to pass by slowly if they weren't meditating.

Despite that, no one grew impatient. Instead, they continued to make gains by watching.

Meng Hao immersed himself in grafting, and he was happy. There was no other place like this Medicine Pavilion, with 1,000,000,000 medicinal plants inside that he could choose from.

Although they were all illusory, that didn't really matter to Meng Hao. They could still help him advance to a higher level in his skill with plants and vegetation.

Another month passed, and Meng Hao's eyes were bloodshot. He had now created 50,000 medicinal plants.

In the beginning, it had been relatively simple. However, the further along he progressed, the more difficult it became. Were he content to do a

perfunctory job, this level would have been simple. However, he placed high requirements on himself. The medicinal plants he was creating now all were composed of at least one hundred other medicinal plants.

In fact, the past 10,000 he had created were grafted from at least five hundred other medicinal plants!

Exhaustion swelled up within him. The fifth, sixth, and seventh levels had all been quite a mental strain on him. In fact, as a result, he had even unwittingly grown a great deal in terms of divine sense.

Even more amazing to Meng Hao was that over the past months, his cultivation base was nearing ninety percent of the power of a true Immortal.

As the sixth month arrived, Meng Hao trembled. His mental energy was almost completely depleted, and his head felt as if it were swollen. Piercing pain occasionally stabbed through his temples, and even his thinking had slowed.

However, he had now created nearly 70,000 medicinal plants.

Not a single one was a repeat, and any of them that appeared in the outside world would certainly cause a huge stir. That was especially true of the last 5,000.... Each one of those contained more than a thousand different grafting elements.

Medicinal plants like that could be refined into a pill just by adding a few minor ingredients.

The spectators outside were entranced and deeply moved by Meng Hao's skill with plants and vegetation. Another half a month passed. Finally, Meng Hao's energy was spent. His face was ashen, and he seemed to be on the verge of collapsing. Even his Eternal stratum couldn't keep up with the mental strain.

He let out a long sigh and finally ceased working.

He had created over 75,000 plants.

"My mind isn't up to the task," he thought. "If I keep going, I might

injure my foundation. Most important of all... my mastery of plants and vegetation isn't good enough, at least not in terms of grafting.

"I think perhaps 10,000 more would be my absolute limit.

"Furthermore, considering my current skill with plants and vegetation, creating an almighty medicinal plant composed of 10,000 grafts, would be too difficult." He took a deep breath and then slowly rose to his feet, his eyes shining with a gleam of obsession.

"I must deeply study the Fang Clan's way with plants and vegetation!" With that, he turned and vanished. When he reappeared, he was outside the Medicine Pavilion. When he saw the packed crowd of 500,000 cultivators, he gaped in shock.

Although he had assumed some people would come to observe, he had never imagined that so many people would show up. He even saw that all sorts of full alchemists were present, many of them still not fully awakened from the reveries of enlightenment they had fallen into while watching Meng Hao.

He was too tired to say anything. The only thing he wanted to do was return to his Immortal's cave and rest for a few days. He immediately flew into the air, transforming into a beam of light that shot off into the distance.

As soon as he flew into the air, the crowds began to come to their senses. They looked at Meng Hao making his way off into the distance, and then went completely crazy.

"That was Fang Hao!!" someone shouted. "He came out!!" More people came to their senses, and when they realized that the screen was gone, they understood that Meng Hao had already emerged from the Medicine Pavilion.

"75,000 medicinal plants, huh. He's a Grandmaster of plants and vegetation! He fully deserves to be called an apothecary!"

"With Grandmaster Fang Hao's skill in plants and vegetation, if he wanted to simply pass through the Medicine Pavilion, I wouldn't dare to

say he could pass the ninth level, but the eighth level would definitely be no problem!"

Everyone was in a tumult as they watched Meng Hao leave. Their eyes shone with fanaticism and reverence. In the world of cultivation, the strong are respected, and it was no different in the Dao of Alchemy Division.

"He stopped on purpose this time, but in a few months, he'll definitely keep going!"

The surrounding alchemists watched Meng Hao leave, and they all sighed emotionally. This was especially true of the tier 8 Elders, whose faces were filled with hope and excitement.

Deep in the inner mountains, Pill Elder Fang Danyun had been watching Meng Hao the entire time. Finally he sighed, and a smile appeared on his face. "There is finally a successor for the Dao of Alchemy Division...."

He waved his right hand, within which appeared an ancient book, upon which were written the words "Classic of Plants and Vegetation."

"Give this to Fang Hao," he said softly, waving his hand again. A mysterious light appeared, covering over the book and taking it away.

Meng Hao flew out of the Dao of Alchemy Division, not even fully aware of his surroundings. However, a moment later, he suddenly stopped in place, and his eyes went wide. His mind felt as if it had just been struck by lightning.

"Dammit! How could I have forgotten to charge merit points!? There were more than 500,000 people there just now! How many months was I in the Medicine Pavilion!? This... This...."

# Chapter 919: Provocation

Meng Hao trembled, his face pale white. At first, he tried not to calculate how much he had lost, but in the end, he couldn't stop himself. His mind filled with a terrifyingly huge number of merit points, and he almost coughed up a mouthful of blood.

"Screwed! Royally screwed!!" He felt like weeping, but no tears would come. All he could do was curse his horrible luck at having completely wasted such a good opportunity to earn merit points.

At this thought, he threw his head back and roared, which caused quite a few nearby birds to scatter in flight.

Trembling, heart bleeding, face ashen, Meng Hao felt completely drained of energy. Listless and depressed, it was at this point that he suddenly noticed that someone was flying through the air behind him.

He turned feebly and saw a young woman; his lifeless countenance caused her to stare in shock.

She was graceful and beautiful, with an entrancing face. She wore a long pink garment, and her fragrance was delicate and pleasing.

She looked at Meng Hao in shock for a moment, before tentatively asking, "Um, are you... Elder Cousin Fang Hao?"

Meng Hao listlessly nodded his head. He was still inwardly tied up in knots over the huge sum of merit points he had lost. In his mind, even the sky had turned completely black.

The young woman's face grew serious as she looked at Meng Hao. She thought to herself that this person was willing to drive himself crazy before giving up, all for the sake of skill with plants and vegetation. She could see a level of unswerving determination in Meng Hao that she did not possess.

"Elder Cousin Fang Hao, I saw you in the Medicine Pavilion just now, and I, Wan'er, couldn't help but admire you." She clasped hands and bowed, then held out a tome toward Meng Hao. "This... is a tome that his

excellency Pill Elder wanted me to give you.”

Meng Hao was still in a daze. Face blank, he muttered, “I just had an unimaginable amount of merit points placed in front of me, but I didn’t cherish them as I should have... what a waste!!”

The young woman gaped for a moment, unsure about the meaning of what she had just heard. “Elder Cousin, what did you just say?”

Meng Hao shook his head and dejectedly accepted the tome. Then he turned and, looking incredibly depressed, headed off into the distance. The young woman watched him make his way off, and couldn’t help but feel even more admiration for him.

“He is definitely worthy of being the eldest grandson of the direct bloodline. Elder Cousin Fang Hao is crazy about the Dao of alchemy. He created more than 70,000 medicinal plants on the seventh level of the Medicine pavilion, but he still feels disappointed. It’s almost like he’s lost his faith and ideals. A person like that is really rare. No wonder his excellency Pill Elder wanted me to give him that tome.

“Wan’er,” she said to herself encouragingly, “you have to work hard and study more, like Elder Cousin!” She looked at Meng Hao leaving, and was filled with reverence.

Meng Hao had no idea how much encouragement his expression had given to that fragile young woman. He continued along his way toward the ancestral mansion, drowsy and out of sorts.

As soon as he entered the ancestral mansion, his mood worsened. Even as he transformed into a beam of light and shot forward, a group of seven or eight people strolled out ahead of him, chatting and laughing.

Among that group of people was a young woman who Meng Hao recognized from when he had first arrived at East Heaven Gate. She was a female cultivator named Fang Hong. She was clearly a natural born beauty, and she currently wore a long, pale garment. She held her hand in front of her mouth and laughed as she walked along. Among those walking with her, three had cultivation bases at the peak of Dao Seeking, similar to false Immortals. There were a few others who were in the Spirit

Severing realm.

All of them were people Meng Hao had seen following Fang Wei back in the temple.

Behind them trailed an old man with salt-and-pepper hair and an apathetic expression. He held his hands in front of him, tucked into the opposite sleeves, and followed the group with a slight bow, almost as if he were a servant.

He was not a member of the Fang Clan, but had a different surname, and had taken shelter with the Fang Clan in exchange for acting as a Dao Protector to members of the younger generation.

The young cultivators around Fang Hong chatted and laughed.

"Hong'er, I heard that when you went out for training this time you ended up taking Reverend Shui Yun as your master. Senior Shui Yun might be just a rogue cultivator, but his cultivation base is incredible. Congratulations! Oh, and now that you're back, don't be in a hurry to leave again. It won't be long now before the centennial rising of the East Ascension Sun. Prince Wei will be in charge of the East Ascension Pavilion, and he's already invited Chosen from quite a few other sects to come enjoy the spectacle. When the time comes, you can meet all of them."

"Yeah, that's right! Princess Hong, of all the Chosen in the Fang Clan, there are few whose cultivation bases exceed yours. You'll definitely be a blazing sun in the East Ascension Pavilion."

In response to what everyone was saying, the young woman smiled slightly and shook her head, although her expression revealed traces of pride.

"Prince Wei and Prince Han both have cultivation bases higher than me," she said. "And as for you, Prince Tao and Prince Hai, with your cultivation bases, as long as you make the proper preparations, you should be able to use an Immortality Illumination Vine at almost any time."

"Not necessarily," said one of her companions. "The clan has

Immortality Illumination Vines, but they're rare. There are only a few available in this generation. Unless you're one of the top three in the current generation, then the only way to get one is to pay a ton of merit points. It's really difficult."

"That's not the case with you, though, Hong'er. With the help of Reverend Shui Yun, you have a much better chance than all of us." Sighs could be heard. It was at this exact moment that Meng Hao flew overhead in a beam of light. The people down below looked up, and the three youths with cultivation bases similar to false Immortals all frowned.

Even the young woman Fang Hong was frowning.

In the Fang Clan ancestral mansion, there were only two people who were qualified to fly. One was Fang Wei, and the other... was none other than Meng Hao.

"Sir Chen, I don't like people flying over my head," said Fang Hong, her voice calm. In response, the old man who had been following the group looked up, and his previously calm eyes began to glow brightly. He looked up at Meng Hao flying through the air.

"Get down here!" he bellowed. He didn't attack, he just spoke. His words didn't echo out very far; they were directed solely at Meng Hao, and appeared to contain natural law that required his orders to be followed. They transformed into something like explosive, muffled thunder that only Meng Hao could hear.

Boom!

Meng Hao suddenly screeched to a halt in midair as an enormous force built up around him. It was as if the air around him had been restricted, and he was suddenly forced downward. Something like a huge hand pushed down, forcing him out of the sky.

His body trembled, and he felt incredible pressure like that of the peak of the Immortal stage, that of a stage 7 Immortal.

"Huh?" thought the old man, frowning. Seeing that he hadn't instantly suppressed Meng Hao, he gave a cold snort and caused his cultivation

base to explode out with power. Massive pressure swelled out, and Meng Hao lost control of his body completely and fell out of the sky.

It wasn't until he landed on the ground that the pressure faded away. The old man's face was calm as he lowered his head, almost as if nothing had happened.

Fang Hong and her followers all looked over at Meng Hao.

Immediately, Fang Hong's followers spoke up.

"So, you're Fang Hao, the one who caused all the ruckus in the Dao of Alchemy Division?"

"Don't forget, it doesn't matter if the Grand Elder gave you the qualifications to fly in the ancestral mansion. If you don't have enough power, don't randomly fly over people's heads."

"You may go now."

These people didn't know much about Meng Hao. After all, the first thing he had done after returning to the clan was spend most of his time in the Dao of Alchemy Division.

All they knew was that his Bloodline Gatebeam was 30,000 meters. This made them feel a bit self-conscious. When it came to the Dao of alchemy however, they viewed it as a lesser type of Dao that wasn't worthy to share the stage with cultivation.

Having spoken their words, they resumed chatting and laughing, completely ignoring Meng Hao as they brushed past him.

Meng Hao had already been in an abominable mood. He had just been flying along, minding his own business, when suddenly he was forced down to the ground. Considering his personality, how could he possibly accept such a thing? His eyes grew cold, and a smile slowly spread out across his face.

It was a smile, but it was a very cold smile.

"So," he said indifferently, "you people see me but don't offer formal greetings! It seems you've forgotten all about the clan rules!"

The eight people frowned and stopped in place, slowly turning back to look at Meng Hao.

“Sir Chen,” said Fang Hong, “get him out of here, why don’t you.”

Sir Chen’s expression was as calm as ever as he nodded, then stepped toward Meng Hao. He pushed out with his right hand, causing an incredible force explode out toward Meng Hao. His goal was to physically push Meng Hao completely away.

As he advanced, the force rumbled out ahead of him. Meng Hao flicked his sleeve, causing a black beam of light to fly out, which transformed into the crocodile. It swished its tail, causing an incredible energy to surge out.

The old man’s face flickered as the tail slammed into him, causing a huge boom to fill the air.

“You, a foreign servant, dare to raise your hand against me?!” Meng Hao said coolly. Then he stepped toward the group of eight.

The eight young cultivators’ faces fell as they first saw the old man fighting the crocodile, and then saw Meng Hao walking toward them.

“And then, you people! I can’t believe you see me but refuse to offer greetings!” He advanced toward them, his energy surging and a cold gleam flickering in his eyes.

The three young men with cultivation bases equivalent to false Immortals immediately stepped forward.

“Why the hell do you think we would offer greetings to you?” said one of them.

“Why the hell do I think you would offer greetings to me? Because I’m the eldest grandson of the direct bloodline! It doesn’t matter which bloodline you people are from, or which branch. All members of this generation call me Cousin!” Even as Meng Hao’s voice echoed out, he slapped out with his right hand.

The three young men snorted, and were just about to attempt to fight back, when all of a sudden, their faces fell. They were completely

incapable of doing anything; Meng Hao's shocking wave of power completely destroyed all of their divine abilities and magical techniques.

Booms rang out as Meng Hao's hand slapped into all three of their faces in succession. Blood sprayed from their mouths as they were sent tumbling backward.

In that same moment, Meng Hao stepped forward, and his leg blurred into a whirlwind as he kicked the three young men over and over again. Booms mixed with bloodcurdling screams as they were sent hurtling backward, where they slammed into the ground.

Cracking sounds could be heard as more than half of their bones were broken.

"What do you think you're doing!?" said one of them, his face falling.  
"We're inside the clan, you—"

"Oh, so it turns out you do know that we're in the Fang Clan," said Meng Hao coldly. "Don't tell me you've forgotten that I'm also surnamed Fang!?" He stepped forward again, then waved his right hand, causing Fang Hong's Spirit Severing acquaintances to cough up blood as many of the bones in their bodies were crushed. Miserable shrieks rang out.

"You see me and actually don't extend greetings!? I'm the eldest grandson, so I guess all I can do is teach you a lesson about the clan rules. And then there's you...." He turned to face Fang Hong. As soon as he stepped forward, a voice called out from the distance.

"Stay your hand!"

Fang Hong's face flickered, and she quickly lifted her right hand into the air, causing a huge, illusory cauldron to appear, upon which the character 'Fang' could be seen. It immediately crushed down toward Meng Hao.

# Chapter 920: An Exception!

“Ten percent of the power of a true Immortal!? Puny!” Completely ignoring whoever it was behind him, Meng Hao smiled coldly and clenched his hand into a fist. He punched out, causing a boom to echo out as the cauldron shattered. His fist continued on toward Fang Hong.

Another boom could be heard. Blood sprayed from Fang Hong’s lips as she doubled over in pain. Meng Hao’s punch was too fierce, and her qi passageways were shattered as she hurtled backward. It didn’t matter that she was a woman, Meng Hao was as cold as ever.

After punching her, he turned icily to face the group that was speeding toward him in the distance.

“Meng Hao, you twerp! How dare you!” Six people were flying through the air. Three of them were white-haired old men with cultivation bases in the Immortal realm. The one in the middle was clearly more powerful than the others, and was at the peak of the Immortal Realm.

That was the one who had spoken just now.

Behind the three old men were two masked cultivators, one whose cultivation base was hidden, making it impossible to see how deep it was. However, he emanated a desolate, murderous aura that was especially strong, as if his only job in the Fang Clan was to kill people.

The last of the group was none other than Fang Yunyi!

He was the one who had yelled out to Meng Hao to stay his hand.

As for the old man who had just spoken, he appeared next to Fang Hong even as his words echoed out. He immediately picked her up in his arms and gave her some medicinal pills.

Fang Hong’s face was pale, and she was quivering. Blood oozed out of her mouth, and it was with difficulty that she swallowed the medicinal pills.

“Grandpa,” she said with a bitter smile, “my... my qi passageways....”

The old man had already noticed that Fang Hong's qi passageways had been shattered, and he responded, "Don't worry. Grandpa will fix this for you!" With that, he turned to glare at Meng Hao, his eyes flickering with killing intent.

"What gall you have! How dare you slaughter people within the clan! There's no need to send you to the clan dungeon, I'll execute you here and now!" With that, the other two old men who had accompanied him began to close in on Meng Hao.

"That crocodile too! Kill it!" The two masked cultivators immediately headed toward the crocodile. Sir Chen instantly fell back to Fang Hong's side, his face anxious.

A cold smile appeared on Fang Yunyi's face, and inwardly, he was going wild with joy at finally being able to catch Meng Hao off guard. This time, he knew that Meng Hao was going to be killed without a doubt.

"Sixth Grandpa, correct?" Meng Hao stood his ground, completely ignoring the two old men who were closing in on him. "Let me ask you, did you see me slaughter anyone?" He slapped his bag of holding to produce his identity medallion.

"I'm the eldest grandson of the direct bloodline. My dad is Fang Xiufeng, and the Grand Elder is my Third Grandpa. If you people dare to kill me, you'll be violating clan rules. Anyone who violates clan rules will be put to death!" As his voice echoed out, the two old men who were moving toward him suddenly stopped in place, their faces flickering as they hesitated.

"I was flying happily through the air," Meng Hao continued calmly, "when these clan members asked this foreign servant to suppress me. And after seeing who I was, they refused to greet me respectfully. Apparently, they aren't familiar with the clan rules, so I set about to teach them a lesson. Sixth Grandpa, have you suddenly developed a vision problem?" He stood there, his expression stony.

"Kill him!" cried Fang Hong's grandfather a second time, with a cold snort. Hearing his words, the two old men clenched their jaws and continued on toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's face flickered, and he fell back. Even before the two old men could get close to him, he slapped his own chest with his palm, coughing up a huge mouthful of blood, and then letting out a miserable shriek. At the same time, he ripped open his bag of holding, causing the jade box that contained the Nirvana Fruits to fly out.

Next, he yelled out at the top of his lungs, "You want to steal my Nirvana Fruits! Grand Elder! Third Grandpa! Someone's trying to steal my Nirvana Fruits!"

Using all the power his cultivation base could muster, he sent his voice echoing out in all directions.

When the Grand Elder gave Meng Hao the Nirvana Fruits, he had sworn an oath that anyone in the clan who dared to steal them from Meng Hao would be exterminated. As Meng Hao's voice spread throughout the clan, many people heard it. The two old men who had been closing in on Meng Hao to kill him, suddenly stopped in place, and their faces fell.

Even Fang Hong's grandfather's face fell, and he gritted his teeth.

"I get it!" continued Meng Hao, backing up, and at the same time, crying out loudly. "You clan members of my generation pulled me out of the sky because you're... you're in collusion with that foreign servant to steal my Nirvana Fruits!!

"You Heaven-damned clan delinquents! How could you be so ruthless! How could you try to steal my Nirvana Fruits!

"Grand Elder, save me! Third Grandpa, if you don't show up quickly, my Nirvana Fruits are going to be taken away! Third Grandpa, Grand Elder, SAVE ME!"

His bellowing caused the enraged three youths with the near-false Immortal cultivation bases to one again cough up blood.

"Stop talking nonsense!" cried Fang Hong, blood oozing from her mouth. She was also getting nervous. "We saw you flying toward us and just wanted you to go around us! We never brought up anything about your Nirvana Fruits!"

"You sharp-tongued troublemaker!" howled Fang Hong's grandfather. "You're not from the Fang Clan! DIE!" As he closed in on Meng Hao, it became apparent that the Grand Elder was nowhere to be seen.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered coldly, and he suddenly lifted his right hand. The Lightning Cauldron appeared. In that critical moment, he looked over at Fang Yunyi, whose face instantly fell.

Rumble!

They instantly switched places, and Meng Hao watched from off in the distance as the old man's palm descended onto Fang Yunyi, who let out a piercing scream.

The old man pulled his palm back at the very last moment, then turned to look at Meng Hao. He was just about to charge toward him once again, when suddenly, several dozen beams of light shot through the air toward them from various directions.

"6th Older Uncle, my Older Cousin entrusted Hao'er to me for safekeeping. If you dare to touch him, I'll wipe out your entire bloodline. Worst case scenario, afterward I'll take my entire family to stay with my Older Cousin on Planet South Heaven!" The speaker was none other than Meng Hao's 19th Uncle, who came to a stop directly in front of Meng Hao. He looked over coldly at Fang Hong's grandfather.

More beams of light descended. Two were middle-aged men, who intercepted the attacks of the masked cultivators against the crocodile, saving it from certain annihilation.

In the blink of an eye, the entire situation had changed. Meng Hao was surrounded by more than a dozen cultivators. However, the man who 19th Uncle had called 6th Older Uncle was also joined by quite a few newcomers.

As they faced off with proverbial daggers drawn, the archaic voice of Grand Elder Fang Tongtian suddenly echoed out from deep within the ancestral mansion.

"That's enough. Fang Hong, Fang Tao, Fang Hai, and the rest of your

companions, you disrespected the rules of seniority. You will be punished in the Fire Smelting Pit for ten days!

“Fang Hao, although clan members treated you disrespectfully, there was no need to attack so viciously. You will also be punished in the Fire Smelting Pit for ten days!

“The sentence will be carried out immediately!”

As soon as the Grand Elder’s voice rang out, Fang Hong and the others’ faces went pale. The Fire Smelting Pit was also called Hell, and to spend ten days there would be like being skinned alive.

The clan members in the area, both those of Meng Hao’s bloodline and 6th Older Uncle’s, didn’t dare to say another word. 6th Patriarch’s eyes flickered and he held his tongue.

However, Meng Hao opened his mouth immediately.

“Third Grandpa, Grand Elder, um... my Spirit Elixir is almost finished! I’m almost ready to absorb the Nirvana Fruits, so I really don’t have time to go to the Fire Smelting Pit. Look, if you make an exception, I’ll make up the punishment later. What do you think?”

Meng Hao’s words were met with utter silence. No one would ever dare to contradict the Grand Elder’s orders. Fang Hong and the others looked on with wide eyes. In their opinion, Meng Hao was really far too brazen. Even the other Elders in the area were gaping at him.

Fang Yunyi was elated, and inwardly, started laughing uproariously. In his hatred for Meng Hao, he rejoiced at Meng Hao’s words to the Grand Elder, and couldn’t wait for Meng Hao to experience even more misery.

“Be quiet!” hissed 19th Uncle. All of the other clan members surrounding Meng Hao also felt that his words were far too crude and rash.

“What?” said the Grand Elder. He had never imagined that Meng Hao would dare to speak up, and when his voice echoed out, it seemed to send a chill through the entire area. However, after the space of a few breaths went by, he spoke further, and the words he uttered caused everyone to gasp.

“Very well. Absorbing the Nirvana Fruits is a very important matter. As soon as you finish, go to the Fire Smelting Pit!”

“Many thanks, Third Grandpa,” said Meng Hao, looking very grateful. Everyone else looked on with shock and other strange expressions. In their memory, the Grand Elder had always been unswervingly just, which was how he had earned the clan’s respect over the years.

But now, he was clearly being partial toward Meng Hao.

“This... the Grand Elder actually just....”

“He called the Grand Elder by the address Third Grandpa.... Now that I think about it, the Grand Elder used to be part of the direct bloodline!” All of a sudden, thoughtful expressions could be seen on the onlookers’ faces. The 6th Patriarch’s face flickered, and he gritted his teeth. Finally, he let out a cold snort. His face extremely grim, he flicked his sleeve and carried Fang Hong away.

As Fang Hong was taken away, she looked back at Meng Hao, and she couldn’t help but muse about how terrifying he was.

“The Grand Elder actually showed partiality toward him....”

The youths with the near-false Immortal cultivation bases were trembling as they clasped hands and bowed toward Meng Hao.

“Cousin....”

Meng Hao grunted in response, then looked over at Fang Yunyi, who was gingerly attempting to sneak away, and gave an obviously fake smile.

Fang Yunyi’s scalp went numb, and the images of what had happened on Planet South Heaven flitted through his mind. Gritting his teeth, he bowed his head.

“Cousin....”

Meng Hao smiled, then turned to clasp hands and express his gratitude to 19th Uncle and the other members of his bloodline. All of them looked at him encouragingly as he transformed into a beam of light and shot away.

“When the Grand Elder looks at Meng Hao, he must be thinking of Meng Hao’s own grandfather. The two of them were brothers, and were very close!”

“Yeah, that’s right. The Grand Elder is always unswervingly just. In the past several hundred years, he’s never shown partiality toward anyone. He hasn’t made a single exception!”

“Hao’er is really a blazing sun of the Fang Clan. The fact that the Grand Elder is willing to make an exception for him illustrates that point!”

Even as they discussed the matter, Meng Hao disappeared off into the distance.

Eventually, he reached his Immortal’s cave.

As soon as he set foot inside, his eyes turned cold, and a grim expression covered his face.

“Grand Elder. Third Grandpa. Why do you want so badly for me to die...?”

# Chapter 921: Objectives

Meng Hao took a deep breath as he sat there cross-legged in his residence. Although he was physically in the Fang Clan right now, he didn't have much of a sense of belonging.

"This isn't my home," he murmured softly. "My dad and mom aren't here. Since they're on Planet South Heaven, Planet South Heaven is my home."

At the moment, he was completely exhausted. After spending half a year in the Medicine Pavilion, and then experiencing the encounter moments ago, he was worn out mentally and in pain physically.

Then he thought again about all of the merit points he had basically lost while he was in the Medicine Pavilion. It was like a knife stabbing through his heart.

"Oh, the pain...." he thought, clenching his jaw. "Thankfully, I didn't go all the way through. Next time I'm definitely going to arrange things ahead of time. No merit points, no watching me!" Having made this decision, he let out a long sigh and then closed his eyes and rotated his cultivation base to begin his recuperation.

Ten days later, he opened his eyes, and they shone with an energetic gleam. He took a deep breath. During the past half year, he had expended a lot of mental energy. Now that he was fully recovered, his eyes glittered. He produced the tome that had been given to him from his bag of holding.

"So, Pill Elder gave this to me...." After a moment of thought, he began to flip through the pages. The more he saw, the more brightly his eyes glowed. This was the true Classic of Plants and Vegetation, and it was incredibly detailed. There were even medicinal plants recorded therein that he hadn't seen in the Medicine Pavilion.

As he skimmed its contents, Meng Hao suddenly realized that his divine sense had experienced growth after his experience in the Medicine Pavilion. He sent it out into the courtyard, where he saw Fang Xi sitting there abjectly. The parrot and meat jelly were not sitting on his shoulder

as usual. They were nowhere to be seen.

Meng Hao gaped for a moment. He remembered seeing Fang Xi in the group of 500,000 spectators outside of the Medicine Pavilion, but he couldn't remember if the parrot and meat jelly had been there. He pushed open the door of his residence, and the sound caused Fang Xi to look up. His eyes were a bit blank, and when he saw Meng Hao, he sighed and rose to his feet.

Hanging his head, he bitterly said, "Coz, you need to punish me. It was all my fault. Lord Fifth and Lord Third, they... I... I...."

Apparently, he couldn't finish his thought.

"What's wrong?" asked Meng Hao in amazement.

"I don't know what happened with Lord Fifth. After you came out of the Medicine Pavilion, I was going to take him and Lord Third back here. However, something happened to Lord Fifth. All of a sudden... he headed toward tier 7 alchemist Fang Shuiyan, that old woman. Lord Fifth and her peacock started fighting....

"There was nothing I could do to stop it. Lord Fifth went crazy.... Lord Third couldn't say anything to stop what was happening either, so he eventually just joined Lord Fifth." Fang Xi seemed to be completely out of sorts, and wasn't even speaking coherently.

As soon as Meng Hao heard Fang Xi's story, he knew exactly what was going on. He remembered that peacock, and its luxuriant coat of feathers....

"Don't worry about it, the parrot was just having some fun with the peacock," Meng Hao said euphemistically.

"Having fun? Coz!" exclaimed Fang Xi in agitation. He seemed upset. "There was definitely nothing fun going on!"

"You didn't see what happened. It... it was terrifying. The peacock's rear end virtually exploded! It was horrific!!" Fang Xi shuddered. When he thought about what he had seen, he felt a sense of terror. Then he thought about how much time he'd spent with Lord Fifth, and how the parrot was

constantly glancing behind him, and all the hair on his body stood on end.

“Coz, that bird... you need to find a place to set it free. It’s simply appalling!” Fang Xi’s breath came in ragged pants.

“You’re still young so you don’t understand,” Meng Hao said, sounding very sure of himself. “As far as the birds are concerned, it was just having fun.”

“Coz, there’s something else I didn’t mention,” Fang Xi continued, unable to hold back. “Once when I went out with Lord Fifth and Lord Third, we encountered a fierce bear, and Lord Fifth... Lord Fifth had... had some fun.”

Meng Hao patted Fang Xi on the shoulder and explained once again that it was all in good fun.

“In the end,” added Fang Xi, “Lord Fifth and Lord Third were taken away by Alchemist Fang Shuiyan....”

“Don’t worry,” said Meng Hao, waving his hand nonchalantly, “That meat jelly can’t be killed, and if the parrot dies, then the world will simply have one less scourge to worry about. Don’t pay them any more attention.” He was well aware that the two morons were incredibly tenacious, and couldn’t be hurt easily. They were virtually indestructible.

“But—”

“Really, don’t say anything more. Come on. Let’s head over to the Dao of Alchemy Division. I wasted an entire half year in the Medicine Pavilion. It’s time to go make some merit points!” Meng Hao shot out of the Immortal’s Cave and Fang Xi reluctantly followed him. The two of them sped toward the Dao of Alchemy Division as fast as possible.

Along the way, Meng Hao’s heart began to surge with excitement. He very much wanted to find out if his tactic of going to the Medicine Pavilion would solve his problem with the merit points.

“Hardships prompt changes, changes bring solutions, solutions resolve hardships!” Before long, the two of them reached the Dao of Alchemy Division and entered the outer mountains. Meng Hao was instantly

recognized.

“It’s Fang Hao! He’s here!!”

“Could it be that he’ll go to the Medicine Pavilion again!? It’s too early, isn’t it? Wait, don’t tell me... he’s going to give a lecture on plants and alchemy!?” As soon as the nearby apprentice alchemists saw Meng Hao, they got very excited, and began to spread word to their friends in the clan.

By the time Meng Hao got to Peak #7191, he was being followed by tens of thousands of people. He stepped onto the platform, cleared his throat, and was just about to begin speaking when suddenly, numerous beams of bright light shot toward the area. In the blink of an eye, the crowd exceeded 100,000 people.

There were even alchemists who emerged from within the inner mountains to come hear Meng Hao lecture about plants and vegetation.

Meng Hao had proven to everyone how terrifyingly skilled he was with plants and vegetation. By now, most people were convinced that his skill was at least tier 8 level!!

In the entire Dao of Alchemy Division, not counting Meng Hao, there were only nineteen people who were presently at tier 8 level when it came to skill with plants and vegetation. Those were the tier 8 alchemists, also referred to as Pavilion Elders of the Pill Pavilion.

People like that would never go out and give lectures. From this, it can be imagined how enthusiastic the audience was. Before much time passed, the audience swelled to 200,000.

Meng Hao didn’t need to say a word about the merit points. Everybody knew the rules, and immediately paid their due.

Meng Hao was also excited to note that the old woman Fang Shuiyan was no longer present on the opposite mountain peak. Without any competition to worry about, he shelved his idea of increasing prices and proceeded to give his lecture.

Six hours later, having collected hundreds of thousands of merit points, Meng Hao gritted his teeth and decided to talk for four more hours. That

pushed his profit into the 1,000,000 range, and Meng Hao went wild with joy.

With so many merit points, Meng Hao now felt much more at ease. All he had to do was give a lecture for a few hours a day, and vast amounts of merit points would come flowing in. All of a sudden, he felt a sense that the Fang Clan's Dao of Alchemy Division was showing him quite a bit of hospitality.

Meng Hao now lived a life of extravagance. He bought vast quantities of medicinal pills and medicinal plants. He even procured plenty of Immortal jade, which, after absorbing the spiritual energy, causing his Immortal meridian to become even more solid. On one occasion, after acquiring what was essentially the clan's entire yearly supply of Immortal jade, he was able to instantly solidify his Immortal meridian to a degree of ninety percent!

His cultivation base experienced rapid growth. He no longer had eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal, but rather, ninety percent. His battle prowess even broke past that of a stage 4 Immortal. Back in his Immortal's cave, he produced the crocodile, and after a bit of sparring, determined that he was now comparable to a stage 5 Immortal!

He was also just barely able to detect the power of Tribulation forming. He knew that once he became one hundred percent true Immortal, the Door of Immortality would descend.

"I've been waiting for a long time for that day to arrive," he thought, eyes glittering with excitement. "I've prepared well, so once I step into true Immortality, I'm going to absorb huge amounts of Immortal qi from the Door of Immortality. I'm going to open dozens of Immortal meridians in one shot!"

This was the same reason why the Chosen of so many sects consolidated their power and waited for true Immortal destiny before making their breakthrough. They wanted to burst into true Immortality by opening multiple Immortal meridians. There were even some Chosen who opened sixty or seventy Immortal meridians in one shot.

Such opportunities were available only when the Door of Immortality appeared. At other times, it would be impossible to experience such a wild leap in one's cultivation base.

At the same time, Meng Hao continued to concoct Spirit Elixir with increasingly rare plants. The quality of the Spirit Elixir he was producing had reached a terrifying level.

The life force in the Nirvana Fruits was growing stronger. Of course, his spirit stones were rapidly depleted, and when he finally reached the end of his supply, he started exchanging merit points to get more spirit stones.

Unfortunately, after making a few exchanges, he was unable to acquire any more spirit stones; the number of spirit stones that could be doled out to any given person was limited.

Actually, few people were aware that such a rule existed. After all, not many people would ever spend as many merit points as Meng Hao had on spirit stones. Meng Hao was shocked by this development, and nearly went mad.

Right now, he did not lack merit points, he lacked spirit stones. He even thought about selling his merit points for spirit stones, but that was actually a violation of clan rules. Of course, violating the rules didn't bother him, since he didn't care much about the rules to begin with.

However, the Fang Clan was in a delicate state at the moment. Meng Hao knew that there were quite a few people who were secretly watching him, and even the slightest mistake could be turned into a major issue.

There were some areas of the ancestral mansion that Meng Hao had never visited. He had stuck to and risen to prominence in the Dao of Alchemy Division. Thanks to his fame and position there, the people who considered him a problem couldn't make a move against him easily.

For the most part, he wasn't very familiar with the Fang Clan. He wasn't well acquainted with the various relatives from other branches, and didn't even know very many people from the direct bloodline.

The people he had dealings with the most were Fang Xi and 19th Uncle.

He didn't really feel like getting very close with anyone else.

He caught sight of Fang Donghan a few times, who always seemed to be trying to avoid him. Meng Hao knew quite well that he was a Chosen, just like Fang Wei. However, he had been suppressed by Fang Wei, and was looking forward to when Meng Hao and Fang Wei finally squared off. Meng Hao understood how he felt.

As far as Fang Xiangshan went, she also avoided him. On the few occasions when they ran into each other, Meng Hao could see the fear in her eyes.

He couldn't help but sigh at this. Was he really that scary?

Regarding the other Chosen, he didn't know them, nor did he have any desire to get to know them.

He had no plans to stay in the Fang Clan for a long time. After all, he had only three objectives in coming here.

The first was to get his Nirvana Fruits. The Second was to excel for his dad and mom's sake, and make all the Chosen of the Fang Clan look at him with respect.

The third was to reach true Immortal Ascension!

Once he achieved those objectives, Meng Hao would leave the Fang Clan. Then, he would use his Immortal Ancient Dao Medallion to join the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite. There... was where he would continue practicing cultivation and truly rise to prominence.

"It's important to have someone to rely on. I learned that when I was in the Reliance Sect. Here in the Fang Clan of Planet East Victory, the Dao of Alchemy Division is what I have to rely on." Meng Hao took a deep breath, and his eyes glittered. Moments later, though, he grimaced.

"However, I'm out of spirit stones. What do I do about that...?"

# Chapter 922: The Sound of a Drum in the Pill Pavilion!

“Spirit stones... spirit stones!” Meng Hao’s face glowed and he took a deep breath.

“Fang Qun told me that the Dao of Alchemy Division has three types of medicinal pills that no one has ever been able to concoct. The clan will give a huge reward to anybody who does. Since I don’t have any spirit stones, I might as well go see if I can concoct one of them and get that reward!” This was the simplest method he could think of, and he was just about to go try it out when Fang Xi’s excited voice could be heard outside his residence.

“Coz, are you there?!”

Before Meng Hao could even respond, Fang Xi pushed the front door open and rushed in, looking very excited, even entranced. As he ran over, Meng Hao noticed that sky outside looked somewhat different than usual.

Meng Hao’s eyes narrowed in concentration.

It was currently midday, but the sky outside almost appeared to be aflame. The entire sky was crimson red, yet no sun was visible.

It was just barely possible to see that the natural law of a great Dao hung up in the sky.

“Coz, I just saw Goddess Fan Dong’er from the Nine Seas God World!!

“And Li Ling’er from the Li Clan! And also some new disciple from the Church of the Blood Orchid!” Fang Xi seemed very excited. When he mentioned Fan Dong’er’s name, his eyes seemed to gleam with adoration, and he seemed especially enthusiastic when he talked about Li Ling’er.

“Lots of Chosen have come. Taiyang Zi, Sun Hai from the Church of the Emperor Immortal, Wang Mu from the Wang Clan, and Song Luodan from the Song Clan. There’s even a guy from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto, someone named Zhou Xin!” As Fang Xi spoke, Meng Hao rose to

his feet. Eyes shining, he reached out and grabbed Fang Xi's shoulders.

"Taiyang Zi is here? And Song Luodan? Li Ling'er? And Sun Hai...?"

Meng Hao started laughing out loud. Just when he started worrying about his lack of spirit stones, a whole throng of people showed up who all happened to owe him money.

"Over the next few days, even more Chosen are going to arrive from the various sects and clans. They're here to watch the East Ascension Sun from the East Ascension Pavilion," Fang Xi exclaimed excitedly. Although he felt that Meng Hao was acting a bit strange, he didn't put too much thought into it.

"East Ascension Sun?" This was the second time Meng Hao had heard someone mention East Ascension. The first time had been when Fang Hong's group had mentioned it.

"Every hundred years, the sun outside of the Nine Mountains and Seas reaches the point in its orbit in which it is closest to Planet East Victory. At that time, Planet East Victory will experience a brand new rising sun!"

"Daoist magic and natural laws of Heaven and Earth will appear. Because the sun is so close, if you have the intuition and understanding, then in the moment that the East Ascension Sun rises, you can bathe in the resulting boundless sunlight. That sunlight contains a great Dao that can strengthen your fleshly body!"

"Coz, you definitely have to go watch. When the East Ascension Sun appears, all of the clan members under the age of 1,000 will fly up to bathe in the sunlight. The higher you fly, and the closer you get to the sun, the more you'll benefit!"

"A hundred years ago," Fang Xi continued excitedly, "Wu Daozi from the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite made a breakthrough, and his fleshly body reached a height almost comparable to true Immortality!"

Meng Hao's eyes glittered. His fleshly body was already incredibly powerful, but now that his Immortal meridian had appeared, his fleshly body was actually a bit weaker than his cultivation base. Furthermore, he knew of no way to improve it. If he could use this chance to do so, it would

be great good fortune.

"When does it start?" Meng Hao asked.

"In seven days," Fang Xi replied.

Meng Hao rubbed his bag of holding and then licked his lips. "Where are Taiyang Zi and all the others?" he asked. "Take me to them."

"Huh?" Fang Xi hesitated for a moment. Just now, he had seen the aforementioned group at the ancestral mansion's main gate. "Oh, Fang Wei invited them all to the East Ascension Pavilion in the East District. That... belongs to their branch of the clan. It would be appropriate to go there on the actual day of the East Ascension Sun, but right now...."

"Oh, I see...." Meng Hao's eyes glittered, and he smiled. "Well, never mind, then. I'll just see them in seven days. First, I need to make a trip to the Dao of Alchemy Division. Why don't you come along?"

Fang Xi shook his head.

"Dad wanted me to go find him. I only came here to tell you about the East Ascension Sun. You go ahead without me, Coz."

Meng Hao nodded, and he and Fang Xi walked out of the residence, after which they went their separate ways.

Meng Hao transformed into a beam of light that shot out of the ancestral mansion and headed toward the Dao of Alchemy Division. Before long, he arrived. Many of the apprentice alchemists were discussing the East Ascension Sun, and numerous full alchemists were making special preparations to concoct pills during that time. Condensing the power of the sun into fire-type medicinal pills would significantly increase their medicinal strength.

Furthermore, the power of the sun could be used to condense sunlight itself to concoct East Ascension Pills. Such pills could only be concocted once every hundred years, during the rising of the East Ascension Sun!

Furthermore, only tier 7 alchemists or higher could actually concoct such pills.

Meng Hao did not go to Peak #7191, but instead, went to find Fang Qun. After he explained what he wanted to do, Fang Qun stared back at him in a daze. He had never seen Meng Hao concoct pills. In fact, he wasn't the only one. No one in the entire Dao of Alchemy Division had ever seen Meng Hao concoct pills.

Because of that, many people speculated that Meng Hao only understood plants and vegetation, not pill concocting.

Others believed that Meng Hao would definitely have an understanding of the Dao of alchemy, and only wondered what realm his pill concocting was in.

When Fang Qun heard that he was going to try to concoct one of the three legendary pills that nobody had ever concocted, he stared in shock. A moment later, though, he started to get excited. Nodding his head, he began to show Meng Hao the way.

The two of them sped through the Dao of Alchemy Division, straight into the inner mountains. Many apprentice alchemists saw them, and their eyes began to shine.

"Fang Hao's going into the inner mountains? Could it be that he's heading to the Medicine Pavilion again?!?!"

"I need to go early this time or I won't get a good seat."

"Come on, let's follow him!" Numerous apprentice alchemists hurried to follow Meng Hao, and soon, he had a crowd of thousands following him. Bright beams of light shot through the air into the inner mountains. Many of the alchemists there sensed what was happening, and immediately joined the crowd.

After they realized he wasn't heading to the Medicine Pavilion, many of them were disappointed. However, it was at this point that people started to realize that he was actually headed...

To the Pill Pavilion!

The Dao of Alchemy Division had a Medicine Pavilion and also a Pill Pavilion!

Enshrined within the Pill Pavilion were vast quantities of medicinal pills. Whenever alchemists concocted pills, they could actually sell them here in exchange for other items that they needed.

It was also the location where a huge reward was offered for those three sacred pills!

“He’s going to the Pill Pavilion? Maybe he’s going to buy some medicinal pills?”

“No, that isn’t right...the Pill Pavilion doesn’t sell pills, it only buys them.... Don’t tell me he knows how to concoct pills?”

All of the people following Meng Hao were very curious. Few of them left; most continued to follow him as he neared the Pill Pavilion.

This pavilion didn’t look very different from the Medicine Pavilion. There were also two old men standing guard outside, as well as a huge stone stele that was packed tight with the names of various medicinal pills.

Another difference between the two was that the Medicine Pavilion floated in the air, seemingly held in place by fetters, as if it wished to fly out of the Dao of Alchemy Division into the sky.

The Pill Pavilion did not float in the air. It was held down on the ground by an enormous stone hand, the fingers of which pierced into the pavilion itself. It, too, seemed to wish to fly away, but was forever obstructed by the gigantic hand.

“The Medicine Pavilion was obviously snatched from somewhere else and then brought to the Dao of Alchemy Division by the Fang Clan’s first generation Patriarch,” thought Meng Hao. “That’s why it’s held in place with fetters; to prevent it from returning to its original master. As for the Pill Pavilion, at a single glance you can tell that it was also snatched from somewhere else, and is being held in place to prevent it from going back to its true master.” A strange expression could be seen on Meng Hao’s face as he looked at the Pill Pavilion. From the situation of these two pavilions, it was possible to see how domineering the first generation Fang Patriarch had been.

In front of the Pill Pavilion were three enormous drums, each of which looked ancient, as if they had existed for countless years. On each of the drum heads could be seen ancient characters, glittering with radiant light.

Heavenly One Thought Pill!

Sea-Cleaving Heaven-Defying Pill!

Skypalace Sunspirit Pill!

Three drums, three sets of ancient characters. These three medicinal pills had been the life's work of three Patriarchs of the Fang Clan of ages past. And yet, in all the years since, no one else from the Fang Clan had been able to concoct them!

It was even publicly acknowledged that not even this generation's most powerful alchemist, Fang Danyun, could concoct it. However, some people speculated that, although Pill Elder could not concoct the Heavenly One Thought Pill and the Sea Cleaving Heaven Defying Pill, he actually could concoct the easiest of the three pills, the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill.

Meng Hao took a deep breath and sent out his divine sense. As soon as it touched the three drums, an archaic voice echoed inside of his head.

"Skypalace Sunspirit Pill. Whoever concocts this pill will receive a reward of 100,000,000 spirit stones, 100,000 Immortal jades, 5,000,000 merit points, 10,000 medicinal plants of your choice from the Dao of Alchemy Division, three clan Daoist magics, and one Immortal treasure. Furthermore, the Dao Bell will toll nine times! Those who wish to attempt this pill, strike the drum and produce the fee of 1,000,000 merit points to acquire a set of ingredients."

"Sea-Cleaving Heaven-Defying Pill! Whoever concocts this pill will receive a reward of 1,000,000,000 spirit stones, 1,000,000 Immortal jades, 20,000,000 merit points, 100,000 medicinal plants of your choice from the Dao of Alchemy Division, six clan Daoist magics, and one Ancient treasure. The Dao Bell will toll 18 times! The ingredient fee is 10,000,000 merit points."

Meng Hao's eyes glittered, and he began to pant. He looked at the drums

with wide eyes.

"Heavenly One Thought Pill. Whoever concocts this pill will be the Lord of the Dao of Alchemy Division! The prerequisite to attempt this pill is to concoct the previous two pills. The ingredient fee is 100,000,000 merit points."

Meng Hao's mind reeled. He knew that, considering the rewards that were available, and the fact that tens of thousands of years had passed without anyone concocting the pills... the Heavenly One Thought Pill was incredibly difficult to concoct.

"I don't really need to concoct the Heavenly One Thought Pill," he mused. "If I can simply concoct the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill and get that 100,000,000 spirit stone reward, that will be enough." Licking his lips, he kept the thought of the reward in his mind as if he had just imprinted it onto his soul. His eyes were completely bloodshot.

"For the spirit stones!! And for that Immortal treasure!" He flew forward.

"I'm going to go all out!" Transforming into a beam of light, he shot toward the Pill Pavilion as the surrounding audience of several thousand looked on. He didn't enter the pavilion, but instead, headed toward the three drums. The eyes of the audience went wide.

In the blink of an eye, he was directly in front of the drums. He then extended his right hand toward the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill drum and struck it with his palm.

DONG!!

The drum reverberated with a deep thrum that echoed out through the entire Dao of Alchemy Division. Ripples spread out in all directions, and all alchemists and apprentice alchemists heard the sound.

"That's... the sound of someone striking a drum at the Pill Pavilion!!"

"Someone's trying to concoct one of the three impossible medicinal pills! Even the simplest one requires a fee 1,000,000 merit points. Who could possibly be so rich? Those pills can't be concocted! It's a complete waste of 1,000,000 points!"

“That’s... an entire 1,000,000 points!!”

The Dao of Alchemy Division was instantly thrown into an uproar.

# Chapter 923: Meng Hao Concocts Pills!

Many of the apprentice alchemists in the outer mountains were listening to various alchemists giving lectures about plants and vegetation. When the drum echoed out, all of the apprentice alchemists lifted their heads up in shock. When they realized that the sound of the drum came from the Pill Pavilion, their faces flickered.

"That's the sound of the drum from the Pill Pavilion! Someone's trying to concoct one of the three legendary medical pills from the Dao of Alchemy Division!!"

"The simplest of them all requires a fee of 1,000,000 merit points! Unless you successfully concoct the pill, those merit points are wasted!"

"Who is it, I wonder?"

The apprentice alchemists in the outer mountains weren't the only ones to have such a reaction. The alchemists in the inner mountains also heard the sound of the drum, and their faces filled with shock. There were some who even subconsciously sneered.

"Nobody has tried to concoct one of those pills for years. I wonder which alchemist is going to try."

"1,000,000 merit points is such a waste. It's a real pity. Although, things like this only happen every so often, so I definitely need to go watch."

Many alchemists flew up from the inner mountains. There were even many alchemists who rarely made public appearances, but still flew toward the Pill Pavilion. After all... this was a spectacle that could only be had at the cost of 1,000,000 merit points.

The tier 7 alchemists in the inner mountains flew into the air with glittering eyes. Even the nineteen tier 8 alchemists heard the sound of the drum, and several of them immediately flew toward the Pill Pavilion.

In the very center of the inner mountains, Pill Elder Fang Danyun sat cross-legged on his mountain peak, looking off toward the Pill Pavilion, his eyes shining with a light of curiosity.

“So, Fang Hao is finally going to try his hand at pill concocting.”

It took only moments for tens of thousands of people to gather around the Pill Pavilion. Beams of light shot toward it continuously as more and more people arrived. When people saw that it was Meng Hao standing outside the Pill Pavilion, they were shocked.

“It’s Fang Hao!”

“Now it makes sense that someone could afford so many merit points. It turns out to be him! But... can he concoct pills? Even if he can, does he really dare to take on those legendary pills, a challenge that countless people have failed over the past tens of thousands of years?”

“He has too many merit points. You know, I think he’s just flaunting the 1,000,000 merit points to attract the attention of the whole Dao of Alchemy Division, and thus, gain more fame. That’s all.”

Meng Hao ignored the crowds that were gathering. As the sound of the drum reverberated out, he held out his identity jade medallion, and 1,000,000 merit points vanished.

Simultaneously, the sound of the drum seemed to enter Meng Hao’s body, and suddenly, a pill formula appeared in his mind. The pill formula was extremely mysterious: he could see it clearly, and yet was unable to commit it to memory.

It was also impossible to imprint it onto a jade slip. Apparently, it was protected by some unique restrictive spell. Actually, Meng Hao was not unfamiliar with such a situation; he had experienced similar things in the ancient Demon Immortal Sect.

“They want to protect the pill formula, in order to make sure it doesn’t get leaked outside the clan.” His eyes flickered as the head of the drum in front of him suddenly rippled like water, and a set of medicinal plants floated out.

In total, there were thirteen of them.

Each medicinal plant could be considered extremely precious. There were five of them that caused a shocking botanical aroma to spread out in

all directions as soon as they appeared. Even Meng Hao's pupils went wide because of that. There were two plants in particular that he found shocking.

One was completely black, with a single delicate flower. It was beautiful, and at a single glance it was obvious that it had an aura of extreme heat circling around it.

Surprisingly, the other plant... was a Sun Blossom!

Meng Hao took a deep breath. He had thought Sun Blossoms to be virtually extinct in the outside world. He had never imagined that he would run into one here. Unfortunately, when compared to the Sun Blossom he had harvested in the Ruins of Immortality, this Sun Blossom was damaged and incomplete. However, it was still a Sun Blossom.

“Considering all of this, those 1,000,000 merit points were actually worth it....” he thought, taking a deep breath. However, he knew that he couldn’t simply take these medicinal plants away; he had to use them here and now to concoct a medicinal pill.

Meng Hao sat cross-legged in front of the Pill Pavilion and closed his eyes to analyze the pill formula. Time passed. More and more people arrived, and soon, 500,000 people were crowded around.

All of them stared at Meng Hao. The sight of someone spending 1,000,000 merit points to concoct a pill was a sight that could only be come across serendipitously. And yet, such a scene was playing out right in front of them. Whether or not Meng Hao succeeded, all of the onlookers were happy to be able to watch this rare scene.

Four hours later, Meng Hao opened his eyes, and they shone brightly.

“This medicinal pill... will not be easy to concoct,” he murmured. “I’ve never come across anything like it before.... It might not be as difficult as concocting something from nothing, but it’s still very challenging. Most importantly, if I fail, the cost will be immense!” He frowned.

“The concocting method actually changes depending on the weather and the time of day. Furthermore, it must absorb Yang qi from each of the

twelve two-hour periods in the day without interruption. Divine Will then comes into being, and it can become a sun spirit!

"However, that's not all. The first word in the name of the pill, Skypalace, is important. It's actually referring to that mythical celestial palace which exists beyond the clouds in the sky...."

Meng Hao frowned deeply. After a while, he patted his bag of holding to produce a pill furnace. It was pitch black, and a face was just barely visible on its surface, which stared fiercely at Meng Hao.

This was the pill furnace Meng Hao had acquired years ago when he became a Violet Furnace Lord in the Violet Fate Sect. 1

He tapped the pill furnace, and a clear, crisp sound echoed out. The pill furnace shuddered, and the face's vicious expression suddenly turned into one of fear and respect.

When the sound of the pill furnace spread out, the apprentice alchemists didn't think much of it. However, the expressions on the faces of the tier 5 and higher alchemists all changed. No longer did they look at Meng Hao with scorn, but rather, with intense concentration.

Whenever masters go to work, the evidence of their foundation can be seen.

All of the tier 5 and higher alchemists could tell that the method with which Meng Hao tapped the pill furnace contained the Dao of alchemy!

"All pill furnaces need to be warmed up! Even a pill furnace that has been used millions of times needs to be warmed up before its full power can be unleashed. But Fang Hao simply tapped the furnace... and produced the same result! Ingenious!"

"It's a different technique for warming up the furnace! How domineering! He dispersed the medicinal qi within the furnace, making it easier for the pill to take shape!"

"To accomplish something like that requires incredible skill in the Dao of alchemy!"

Meng Hao ignored all of the comments from the audience, and focused all of his attention on the medicinal pill he was going to concoct. No matter how he went about it, he had to attempt to the concoct the pill in order to solve his spirit stone quandary.

"I'm actually not sure I can do it," he thought. After reflecting for a moment, he reached out to grab one of the medicinal plants. As he held it there in his hand, it seemed to come to life. All of its impurities dissipated, and it turned transparent, like crystal. Then Meng Hao crushed it and placed it into the pill furnace.

This action also caused the other alchemists to be visibly moved.

Meng Hao took a deep breath and looked up into the sky. Then, he placed his left hand onto the pill furnace, causing it to burn, although there was no flame. The medicinal plant instantly began to melt into a liquid.

Two hours later, Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and he selected another medicinal plant. Soon, 24 hours had passed. Last, he put the Sun Blossom into the mix, and then, he placed both hands onto the pill furnace.

Everyone was panting as they watched. During the last day in which they had watched Meng Hao work, they had been able to catch glimpses of his pill concocting techniques. People began to grow more and more shocked at Meng Hao's proficiency in the Dao of alchemy.

"Time to look at this pill!" Meng Hao growled above the rumbling sound that echoed out from within the pill furnace. Suddenly, the pill furnace's lid popped off, and a medicinal pill flew out.

As soon as it appeared, it radiated incredible light for 300 meters in all directions, causing everyone's minds to reel, and a collective gasp to ring out.

"He succeeded?"

"He... actually succeeded?"

Meng Hao closed his eyes. Cracking sounds could suddenly be heard from the medicinal pill, and it shattered, transforming into black sediment

that appeared to be somewhat toxic. The sediment slowly transformed into wisps of black smoke.

Failure.

After a moment of silence, everyone burst out into conversation. Meng Hao sat there with his eyes closed, thinking. In truth, he had already known that he had failed about halfway through the concocting process.

However, a failure was exactly what he needed. Based on his skill in the Dao of Alchemy, his analysis of the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill formula told him that there were thousands of different possible concoction methods. Each one seemed as if it would lead to success, and yet simultaneously seemed doomed to lead to failure.

After an hour, Meng Hao's eyes suddenly opened. "Based on what I learned from this failure, further analysis now reveals 791 possible concocting methods remaining."

With that, he extended his hand and struck the drum again. The sound of it echoed out, and 1,000,000 merit points vanished. Once again, thirteen medicinal plants flew out.

The audience saw Meng Hao making another attempt and thought he was crazy. Despite the outrageous amount of merit points he was spending, he had decided to try again.

24 hours later, the pill furnace rumbled, and another medicinal pill flew out. This time, it radiated light for 3,000 meters. The pill itself was violet-gold in color, and looked like an inimitable treasure. However, a moment later, cracking sounds could be heard, and it collapsed into wisps of black smoke.

"As expected," Meng Hao thought, "Based on what I learned this time, I've narrowed it down to 216 concocting methods!" Without stopping to rest, he hit the drum, paid another 1,000,000 merit points for thirteen more medicinal plants, and started a third concocting effort.

The audience gaped in shock. When they saw him squandering such a vast amount of wealth, even they felt pain in their hearts.

"Just how many merit points does he have to squander them so freely? After all these years, nobody has ever successfully concocted that medicinal pill, what makes him think he can?"

"If he thinks he has too many merit points, he should just give some of them to me...."

Another 24 hours passed, and rumbling could once again be heard. Meng Hao's third concoction was a failure.

However, his expression lacked the slightest bit of dejection, and in fact, his eyes were glowing.

"From this third defeat, I've now narrowed it down to 17 possible methods that could lead to success!" He struck the drum a fourth time, shocking everyone. Even the tier 6 alchemists thought he was crazy.

After another 24 hours, four straight days of concocting, he failed again.

"From this fourth failure, I have now narrowed down the total possible methods to only 3!" Taking a deep breath, eyes completely bloodshot, he struck the drum again.

The sound reverberated through the air as he began a fifth concoction.

24 hours later, a medicinal pill flew out of the furnace, shone with brilliant light, and then collapsed. Meng Hao suddenly shot to his feet.

"I understand now!" Eyes shining, he struck the drum a sixth time!

\*

1. Meng Hao got the black pill furnace in [chapter 281](#). The furnace initially resisted him, making it impossible for him to use. Later, he handed it over to the meat jelly in [chapter 295](#). Eventually he forced it to capitulate when he concocted the Perfect Gold Core Pill in [chapter 336](#). He also used it in [chapter 394](#), when he was in the Western Desert.

# Chapter 924: Skypalace Sunspirit Pill

All of the successive failures left the onlookers astonished. However, the tier 7 alchemists were starting to catch on to what Meng Hao was doing.

“Every failure actually represents an exponential increase in the chances for success!”

“He... might really be able to succeed in concocting it!” The tier 7 alchemists were all panting as they exchanged shocked looks.

As for the tier 8 alchemists present, their eyes shone with curious gleams.

Meng Hao now only had a bit more than 1,000,000 merit points left. If he failed for a sixth time, he would be unable to continue with further attempts. He spent the merit points, and then his eyes flashed as the thirteen medicinal plants flew out.

“The first difficult aspect of concocting the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill is that the medicinal plants must be adjusted every two hours according to the weather, time, and strength of the spiritual energy in the area!

“Success requires profound skill with plants and vegetation, as well as significant preparation in terms of grafting techniques.

“The second difficult aspect has to do with the pill itself. Although the role of the thirteen medicinal plants in the pill formula seems fixed, in actuality, there is no true set pill formula. The thirteen medicinal plants cannot be used in a fixed sequence, but rather, must be added according to the time of day in which the pill is being concocted.

“The original pill formula can definitely be used to successfully concoct a Skypalace Sunspirit Pill, but only in a unique place, at a unique time, and under unique conditions of spiritual energy. Under any other circumstances, concocting the pill with the original formula would lead to failure.” Meng Hao eyed the thirteen medicinal plants and took a deep breath.

“A third area of difficulty... is that this pill actually does not require a pill

furnace. It requires twelve two-hour periods to concoct, and yet thirteen medicinal plants are provided. One of those medicinal plants... acts as the pill furnace!

"A fourth difficulty is that the concocting must be completed in exactly twelve two-hour periods. Even one breath beyond that amount of time will lead to a high chance of failure." Meng Hao's eyes shone with a bright light. He had concocted many pills, and had even concocted something from nothing.

His skill in the Dao of alchemy was unfathomable. And yet, this was his first time encountering a medicinal pill that had so many intrinsic internal variables. He took a deep breath and looked up at the sky. Currently, it was midday.

He waited silently. Time passed one breath at a time. Most of the audience looked on, astonished, but the tier 8 alchemists' eyes were suddenly shining brightly.

Simultaneously, at the center of the inner mountains, Pill Elder rose to his feet and gazed at the Pill Pavilion. A glimmer of excitement could be seen deep in his eyes.

"He's onto something!" murmured Fang Danyun. "Actually, I can also concoct Skypalace Sunspirit Pills, but only on this mountain, during the middle of the centennial rising of the East Ascension Sun. That is the only day... when I can perfectly concoct it."

"On any other occasion, my success rate of concoction would be only one in ten, and the result wouldn't be of very high quality."

Back above the Pill Pavilion, the sky was now shifting into afternoon. Meng Hao's eyes glittered, and he quickly reached out to grab the Sun Blossom. All of its branches and leaves were stripped off in the blink of an eye, leaving behind only the flower petals themselves, which spread open into the shape of a bowl.

"Refine the Sun Blossom into a pill furnace!"

In the moment that the Sun Blossom was successfully transformed into

a pill furnace, Meng Hao's eyes flickered with the glow of augury as he mentally analyzed all of the twelve medicinal plants. Then, he reached out to grab one of the medicinal plants, at the same time sending the power of his cultivation base out to transform the shape of the plant. Its medicinal properties were neutralized, and he began to mold it according to the current Yang qi and spiritual energy in the area.

A moment later, the entire medicinal plant transformed into a drop of shining, golden liquid, which he dropped into the Sun Blossom.

Beads of sweat dotted his forehead by the time he finished with that first drop. He continued to channel heat into the Sun Blossom, and also meditated to clear his mind. Soon, the second of the two-hour time periods arrived, and his eyes snapped open. He looked up at the sky, felt the sunlight and the spiritual energy, and then selected another medicinal plant. Following the same method as before, he transformed it into a liquid, which he dropped into the Sun Blossom.

The third two-hour period arrived, then the fourth, and the fifth...

Time passed. The sun set, and dusk fell. Two moons rose as Meng Hao refined a black flower. His expression was extremely intent, especially during the final four two-hour periods. He was clearly expending an incredible amount of mental energy, as much as he had when challenging the Medicine Pavilion.

Every two hours, he had to select the appropriate medicinal plant, and then transform it in accordance with the transformations of Heaven and Earth. This required significant consideration and judgement, and was something that even tier 8 alchemists would have difficulty with.

If it wasn't for the fact that Meng Hao's skill with plants and vegetation was at an incredible level, and that he also had shocking talent in the Dao of alchemy, he would never have been able to accomplish this.

The ninth two-hour period came, then the tenth and the eleventh....

Noon of the second day arrived as Meng Hao selected the final medicinal plant. He transformed it into a liquid, and then dropped it into the Sun Blossom pill furnace. Eyes bloodshot, face a mask of exhaustion,

he extended both hands and pushed down onto the Sun Blossom.

His action caused the Sun Blossom to wrap around itself, transforming into a fist-sized flower bud that slowly floated up into the air.

As of this moment, the eyes of hundreds of thousands of panting spectators were all fixed on the flower bud.

The events of the past six days had left everyone shaken, apprentice alchemists and full alchemists alike. Meng Hao's pill concocting was something that exceeded the imaginations of everyone present. Despite having witnessed the matter with their own eyes, it was still something that words could not describe. They weren't even sure exactly what he was doing.

The moment had arrived which would reveal whether this concoction was a success or a failure.

Meng Hao looked up at the floating Sun Blossom bud.

Suddenly, beam after beam of light began to shoot out from inside. They pierced through the petals, shining out for 100,000 meters in all directions, penetrating Heaven and Earth.

More beams of light continued to shoot out, the pinnacle of resplendence. The flower bud slowly began to open, the petals spreading apart one by one to reveal a blinding light.

The light caused the sky to fade and all the land to go quiet. In the blink of an eye, all color everywhere dimmed, despite it being high noon. It was as if these flower petals... contained a sun.

That sun rose up, and just barely visible within was a figure seated cross-legged. It was almost as if this figure had been born inside the sun, and was a sun spirit!

Skypalace Sunspirit Pill!

DONG.... DONG.... DONG....

The ancient Dao bell slowly appeared above the Fang Clan ancestral mansion and began to send out its ancient toll. Nine tolls could be heard,

which echoed out in all directions. At the same time, writing became visible on the surface of the bell itself.

### Fang Hao – Skypalace Sunspirit Pill Concoction – Success!

The words, along with the sound of the bell, were transmitted into the minds of every clan member on Planet East Victory. As of that moment, everyone knew exactly what had just occurred.

The entire Dao of Alchemy Division was thrown into an uproar. Even people who had not come to watch events unfold at the Pill Pavilion could see the blinding light emanating from that very area, and their faces flickered.

Then the toll of the bell could be heard in their minds, and they flew into the air toward the Pill Pavilion.

At the same time, every Fang Clan member on Planet East Victory felt roaring in their minds, regardless of where they were or what they were doing at the moment.

“Fang Hao again!! He... he actually concocted a Skypalace Sunspirit Pill!!”

“Nobody has been able to concoct that medicinal pill for tens of thousands of years. I can’t believe he succeeded! From today on, his position within the Fang Clan is going to be completely different!!”

All bloodlines were astonished, and countless clan members felt their minds reeling. By now, the name Fang Hao was committed to all of their memories. It could be said that during the past year, Fang Hao... had repeatedly astonished the Fang Clan.

In all of the Fang Clan, he was the one who had caused the Dao Bell to ring the most. Not even Fang Wei could do something like that. Even more important... he caused his name to appear on the Dao Bell itself. To the Fang Clan, that was an inestimable honor!

His name, and the words next to it on the Dao Bell, would last for an eternity. As long as the Fang Clan existed, along with its Dao Bell, those words would remain!

The direct bloodline was thrown into a state of complete excitement. The more Meng Hao rose to prominence, the greater their hope in the revival of the direct bloodline.

“Cousin, it’s clear that Hao’er is a true Chosen of the Fang Clan!” thought 19th Uncle, laughing loudly as he looked in the direction of Planet South Heaven.

Meanwhile, Fang Wei’s father and grandfather sat gloomily in the ancestral mansion. Fang Wei’s father, Fang Xiushan, grabbed a magical jade bottle that rested next to him, and crushed it.

“That damned son of a bitch! I can’t believe his Dao of alchemy is at such a high level!

“He concocted a Skypalace Sunspirit Pill. By rising to prominence in the Dao of Alchemy Division, he has risen to prominence in the clan in general. Nobody will dare to make a move against him now!” Fang Xiushan gritted his teeth, and a vicious expression could be seen on his face.

“Dad, that son of a bitch MUST die, for Wei’er’s sake! We need to open the Fang Clan Immortal World!!”

His father took a long, deep breath, and his eyes flickered with killing intent.

“That’s not something I can do on my own,” he said. After a moment of thought, even stronger killing intent flickered in his eyes.

In the main temple of the ancestral mansion, Grand Elder Fang Tongtian stood at the door, gazing off toward the Dao of Alchemy Division. On his face could be seen rare look of surprise.

“Did I... do the wrong thing?” The Grand Elder suddenly seemed to grow a bit older. “No, I didn’t. It’s all for the clan!”

In another location within the East District of the ancestral mansion was a lake known as Brightmoon Lake. Long ago, an ancient Heavenly Dragon passed away in this location, making the Immortal qi abundant there. In fact, the location was essentially a one-of-a-kind Blessed Land on Planet

East Victory.

In the middle of the lake was a beautifully ornamented building. It was very large, and was currently occupied by a few dozen people who were talking and laughing. In the middle of them all was Fang Wei, next to whom as Fang Yunyi and other Fang Clan Chosen such as Fang Hong.

Fang Donghan and Fang Xiangshan were there, as well as Taiyang Zi, Sun Hai, Song Luodan, Wang Mu and Li Ling'er, and Chosen from other clans.

Fan Dong'er was also in the group, with the female corpse floating there behind her. Her expression was calm, and she did not seem out of sorts like she had back in the Ruins of Immortality. Quite the opposite; she now wore a sweet, beautiful smile.

Fang Wei was also smiling softly. He was versed in the ways of etiquette, and was very cultured and refined, causing quite a few of the female cultivators to be in very high spirits.

Currently, the group was discussing the Three Great Daoist Societies' recent trial by fire. Of course, the name Fang Mu came up; many people believed that Fang Mu... was either not a member of the Fang Clan, or was actually Fang Wei himself.

Fang Wei did nothing to refute the idea that he was Fang Mu; all he did was shake his head and change the topic. Of course, that only confirmed the suspicions of many.

"I've heard that the Fang Clan has an Astral Projection magic," said Taiyang Zi, his eyes glittering. "So in the end, is Fang Mu... really you, Elder Brother Fang?"

Fang Wei smiled, and was about to say something in response when his face suddenly flickered. It wasn't just him; the faces of all the members of the Fang Clan flickered, and they subconsciously turned to look toward the Dao of Alchemy Division.

# Chapter 925: Future Brother-In-Law?

Fang Yunyi's face suddenly looked extremely unsightly. The faces of the other Chosen who surrounded Fang Wei also darkened, as did the faces of all the other Fang Clan members who were there to accompany Fang Wei.

In their opinion, even though Meng Hao was the eldest grandson of the direct bloodline, in the Fang Clan, it was Fang Wei who had been declared Dao Child by the Patriarch. Fang Wei was sure to reach the Ancient Realm within a thousand years, and therefore, he was someone that no one could afford to depose or offend.

In addition to that, there were Fang Yunyi's provocations; he constantly told everyone about how vicious Meng Hao was. In the end, many of the Chosen of the clan were already fed up with Meng Hao.

Deep within Fang Donghan's eyes was a virtually imperceptible flicker. Everything that was happening was exactly what he wanted to see. The more Meng Hao rose to prominence, the more at odds he would be with Fang Wei, and the two would surely become irreconcilable adversaries.

"The two of them are going to fight each other sooner or later," he thought. "And my own opportunity to rise up will come... when that battle ends!" He lowered his head so that others would not be able to see the wild ambition in his eyes.

Fang Xiangshan stood off to the side, panting, her eyes wide. She had seen Meng Hao a few times within the clan, and had always scurried away at the sight of him. Now the sound of the bell echoed in her mind. How could she ever have imagined that Meng Hao... would actually concoct a Skypalace Sunspirit Pill?

The entire Fang Clan was shaken!

"What happened?" asked Song Luodan with a smile, his eyes flickering. The Chosen of the other clans all looked curiously at Fang Wei, even Li Ling'er and Fan Dong'er.

A touch of scorn could be seen within Li Ling'er's expression. When the

subject of Fang Mu came up earlier, she could only laugh grimly at how Fang Wei had acted. She well knew that Fang Mu was not Fang Wei, but rather, the detestable Meng Hao.

Fang Wei's expression returned to normal, and he smiled slightly as he turned back to the other Chosen.

"Oh, nothing really," he said. "Just a clan member concocting a pill, which caused the Dao Bell to toll, that's all. Fellow Daoists, once this day passes, the day of the East Ascension Sun will be upon us."

"I, Fang Wei, would like to congratulate all of you ahead of time on what you will gain. This is a day of jubilee for the Fang Clan that happens once every hundred years, and as one of the Four Great Clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, it is always our pleasure to invite disciples from all the various sects and clans. Let us once again enjoy this East Ascension Sun together!!"

Fang Wei's words made it difficult for anyone to ask further questions. They resumed chatting and laughing, although nobody forgot about what had just happened.

Sun Hai's expression was that of extreme haughtiness as he chatted politely with the Fang Clan cultivator next to him. The Fang Clan members didn't show the slightest bit of disrespect. After all, they had recently heard that Sun Hai had clinched the nomination to become the Imperial Child of the Church of the Emperor Immortal.

"Now that you mention it," said Sun Hai, laughing heartily and rubbing his bald head, "I actually have a deep connection with the Fang Clan.

"I have a Junior Sister in the Church of the Emperor Immortal who happens to be a member of the Fang Clan." When Sun Hai mentioned this Junior Sister, his eyes glowed with adoration. He still remembered the first time he had seen the young woman, how he had stared blankly, and how it felt as if his mind were being struck relentlessly by lightning. In that moment, it had seemed as if that young woman from the Fang Clan was the only thing that existed in the whole universe.

Although her true identity was kept a secret in the Church of the

Emperor Immortal, Sun Hai knew that she was a member of the Fang Clan.

He had sworn an oath that, one day, the two of them would be united as beloved. In the course of pursuing that dream, he had already been violently beaten up on several occasions, all just to be near her....

Each time he was beaten up, he got extremely excited, as he took it as an expression of her desire to be on intimate terms with him.

Within the East Ascension Pavilion, everyone was talking about the imminent sunset, and then the following rise of the East Ascension Sun. Outside of the pavilion, the shores of Brightmoon Lake were encircled by more than a hundred thousand people. Most of them were Fang Clan members younger than 1000 years of age, and although they were all extremely excited in their anticipation of the following day's sunrise, they were now all shaken inwardly by the tolling of the Dao Bell.

Fang Xi was in the crowd, a bit closer to the lakeshore than most of the others. Currently, he was clenching his fists in excitement, but also feeling a bit disappointed that he hadn't gone to watch Meng Hao's performance earlier.

In his excitement, he didn't notice that within the East Ascension Pavilion, Fang Yunyi's grim gaze had come to rest on him.

"I don't dare to provoke Meng Hao again," Fang Yunyi thought, "but Fang Xi... is always following him around! He's just looking for trouble!" With a cold snort, he turned his head to a nearby clan member and whispered a few sentences. The young man hesitated in response, after which Fang Yunyi spoke a few more words. The young man immediately left the pavilion to go make the appropriate arrangements.

Meanwhile, back in the Dao of Alchemy Division, Meng Hao was looking at the medicinal pill floating in midair. He exhaled deeply as the blinding but gentle light surged out from the medicinal pill. Finally, he made a grasping motion, causing the pill to fly down into his palm, whereupon he examined it closely.

The minds of the surrounding cultivators trembled as they stared

blankly at Meng Hao and the medicinal pill in his hand. Gasps filled the air.

It was clearly... a Skypalace Sunspirit Pill!

The medicinal pill contained unsurpassable Yang characteristics, as well as a divine air. To cultivators who cultivated fire magic, it was like a Heavenly material or Earthly treasure. In fact, it was a medicinal pill that Spirit Realm cultivators couldn't consume, and even Immortal Realm cultivators who used it would do so with extreme caution.

After absorbing it successfully, one's fire magic would without doubt achieve an incredible breakthrough, as would one's cultivation base. Any fire poisoning that resulted would actually be an incredible divine ability to any cultivator who practiced fire magic.

Furthermore, because of the East Ascension Sun on the following day, if this pill was consumed at that time, the internal fire and the external fire would combine, catalyzing the pill's medicinal properties and making it endlessly powerful in terms of body refinement!

To any alchemist, this pill... was even more precious. By studying it, one could potentially refine and improve one's Dao of alchemy. When it came to the other two rare medicinal pills of the Fang Clan, there were none left in the Pill Pavilion. There were still some Skypalace Sunspirit Pills remaining though, less than ten.

Rumor had it that those pills had been there for a long time, and could only be acquired by exchanging a significant amount of merit points.

Of course, the Medicine Immortal Sect could concoct the pill, but to purchase it there required a vast and dreadful expenditure of spirit stones. Even tier 7 alchemists wouldn't necessarily be able to buy one.

Immediately, the surrounding alchemists began calling out, desirous of purchasing the pill.

"Alchemist Fang, are you going to sell that pill?"

"How many spirit stones are you selling it for?! I want to buy it!"

As soon as Meng Hao heard spirit stones mentioned, his eyes began to glow. As he hesitated, the previously invisible tier 8 alchemists in the area suddenly materialized.

Immediately, the faces of the full alchemists in the crowd flickered, and they simultaneously clasped hands and bowed.

“Greetings, Pavilion Elders!”

Their reaction caused the other members of the audience to gasp and look at the unprepossessing old men who had just appeared. Their minds spun as they realized that, other than Pill Elder, these were the most supreme figures in the Dao of Alchemy Division, the Pavilion Elders!

“Greetings, Pavilion Elders!”

“Greetings, Pavilion Elders!”

All of the surrounding hundreds of thousands of cultivators clasped hands and bowed. The rumbling sounds of their voices echoed out like thunder. In response, the five Pavilion Elders’ faces remained expressionless. One of them, a rather short, hunchbacked old man, smiled and waved his hand, causing him to flicker and then appear in front of Meng Hao.

“Fang Hao offers greetings, Pavilion Elder!” said Meng Hao, clasped hands and bowing.

“Fang Hao, there’s no need to act like this. The Dao of Alchemy Division has a rule that any person who concocts one of the three sacred pills will be granted the status of Pavilion Elder. Come. I shall take you to pay a visit to Pill Elder.” The old man’s face glowed with admiration and approval. The other four elders around them, despite their expressionless faces, emanated similar feelings.

Meng Hao took a deep breath as he obediently followed them. The entire group transformed into beams of prismatic light that shot further into the inner mountains.

They left behind hundreds of thousands of cultivators, all of whose faces shone with envy. As for all of the apprentice alchemists who had listened

to Meng Hao's lectures, they looked extremely excited. Since they considered themselves to be followers of Meng Hao, that meant... they were the followers of a Pavilion Elder!

Off in the distance in midair, the Pavilion Elders looked at Meng Hao's obedient and charming demeanor, and their approval of him deepened.

"Neither arrogant nor rash," said one of the elders, smiling. "Furthermore, you have no flaws of character, and also understand etiquette. You might be a bit greedy, but there's no harm in that. Hao'er, you're really remarkable! Far more exceptional than your father."

"My dad?" Meng Hao gaped.

"Back before your father met your mother, he came to me to concoct some pills. He was extremely arrogant and domineering, and even threatened me! He said that if I didn't concoct the pills for him, he would set up my granddaughter with some Junior Brother of his." The old man suddenly looked a bit irritated, and he harrumphed.

"Really?" exclaimed Meng Hao, staring with wide eyes. He could hardly believe that his father, who seemed so mighty and solemn, eternally strict, would act like the person this Pavilion Elder had just described.

"It's absolutely true in every way!" said another of the Pavilion Elders, nodding earnestly. "After he met your mother, your father became much more restrained. To think that, back in the day, he was the number one bully on East Victory. He oppressed all the men and subjugated all the women!" The old man sighed.

Meng Hao cleared his throat and shook his head, unsure of what to say, and still not quite able to believe what he was hearing.

"That's why I say that you're remarkable, Hao'er," said the hunchbacked old man. "Wonderful and with boundless prospects." He laughed heartily and looked at Meng Hao with an expression of praise.

"Pavilion Elder," Meng Hao asked, "in the end... did you refine the pills for him?"

"Hmph! I am upright and proud," the old man said haughtily. "I won't

bow my head to anyone! I have my principles, and because of that, if I don't feel like concocting pills, it doesn't matter who comes to me, even your father, do you think I would make an exception? Therefore, I only concocted five hundred batches of medicinal pills for him. Not one more!"

Off to the side, another old man who hadn't spoken so far looked at Meng Hao and winked.

Meng Hao blinked, cleared his throat, and didn't dare to ask another question.

Before long, the Pavilion Elders had led Meng Hao to the very center of the inner mountains. Off in the distance was a peak that towered up into the swirling clouds. Upon close inspection, it was possible to see countless caves riddling the heights of the peak.

Gradually, a droning sound became audible from within the caves, a sound that caused Meng Hao's scalp to go numb.

Before they could get very close, countless black beams shot out from the caves. In the blink of an eye, the sky was filled with millions of black beetles, which were usually known as Split-horned Scarab Beetles! 1

Buzzing sounds filled the air as millions of them swarmed around Meng Hao's group, emanating astonishing energy.

"Fear not," said the hunchbacked Pavilion Elder, smiling. "We call these bugs Unicorn Immortals, and they are personally raised by Pill Elder himself. Actually, there's something about him you probably don't know. Pill Elder... excels, not in the Dao of alchemy, but in the Dao of insects!"

Meng Hao was shaken. Pill Elder didn't excel in the Dao of alchemy, and yet was a tier 9 alchemist. One could only imagine how terrifying he would be if he did excel in it. Seeing these Unicorn Immortals, caused him to recall the countless black beetles he had seen in the medicinal plant garden in the Ruins of Immortality.

It was at this point that an archaic voice suddenly echoed.

"Fang Hao, come...."

The Unicorn Immortals circled around the mountain peak and then shot back into one of the caves.

\*

1. In Chinese, the word for scarab beetle is literally “Golden Turtle.” There is an extra line that I’m leaving out of the main text which reads, “Although the name has the world ‘turtle’ in it, these weren’t turtles, but vicious bugs!”

# Chapter 926: Daos and Tools!

Meng Hao took a deep breath and headed toward the mountain peak. When he arrived, he saw an old man in white robes, surrounding by swirling mists. He stood on top of the mountain, his back to Meng Hao. As Meng Hao approached, the man turned to face him, and smiled.

Meng Hao's eyes widened as soon as he caught sight of him.

The feeling he got when he looked at this old man was very similar to the feeling he got from Pill Demon!

It was actually extremely similar. In fact, although their physical appearance was different, in terms of the energy within him, it seemed almost exactly the same.

As he stood there with the mists swirling around him, Meng Hao almost thought he was looking at his master.

Both wore white robes, and both had long white hair. Both were aged, and both were surrounded by a swirling medicinal aroma. They seemed equally kind, and seemed to both be filled with the same feeling of anticipation.

The old man looked over at Meng Hao and said, "Fang Hao, to be able to concoct a Skypalace Sunspirit Pill, especially considering that it was done at a time of year and time of day not specific to the pill formula, means that your Dao of alchemy has already reached the pinnacle."

From the man's words, Meng Hao was already able to tell that the rumor about Pill Elder being incapable of concocting the three sacred medicinal pills was likely not true.

The key to understanding the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill was understanding that there was 'no specific' time or hour. For Pill Elder to say this indicated that he already had a deep understanding of the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill.

Meng Hao thought for a moment. As he looked at Pill Elder, the drone of the Unicorn Immortals filled his ears. Sometimes, all of them would make noise at the same time, giving rise to an incredibly intense sound. Other

times, only a few would make noise. Either way, the sound was continuous.

“Fang Hao, look over there, and tell me what you see.” Pill Elder glanced off into the distance, toward the numerous cloud-wreathed mountain peaks.

Meng Hao suddenly realized that his heart had become very calm after laying eyes on Pill Elder. He felt free and at ease, as if listening to the old man speak had caused him to enter some strange state.

Although he couldn’t explain it clearly, for some reason his heart felt more and more calm as he looked off into the distance at the mountains and clouds.

Instead of answering the question, he asked one of his own. “Senior Pill Elder, may I ask, what do you see, sir? Or perhaps you can tell me what it is you wish me to see?”

Pill Elder laughed at Meng Hao’s slippery words. He didn’t seem to mind, and in fact, seemed to approve. Apparently he hadn’t been looking for an answer to begin with.

“I see mountains, and I see clouds,” said Pill Elder. “I see the cultivators of the Dao of Alchemy Division, and I see the world that belongs to our Dao of Alchemy Division.” He sighed.

Meng Hao remained silent, unsure of what hidden meanings might be contained within Pill Elder’s words.

“These things are tools. They are both tangible and intangible, visible and invisible. They are tools of the Dao of Alchemy Division, or perhaps you could even say, its physical form.

“30,000 years ago was the golden age of the Dao of Alchemy Division. Our Dao and our tools were united, and seemed as if they would exist for all eternity.... However, many of the Patriarchs of the Dao of Alchemy Division passed away into meditation. Then, the last of the Patriarchs from that age turned against our Dao of alchemy, and founded the Medicine Immortal Sect.

“At that time, we were battered by theories from other Daos of alchemy from the outside world. From that time on, the tools of the Dao of Alchemy Division... were shattered.

“For tens of thousand of years after that, one generation of alchemists after another has contemplated alchemy, and attempted to restore us to our previous pinnacle. However... their Dao of alchemy had long since forgotten the existence of our own tools, and was influenced by the Daos of alchemy from the outside world.

“It was as if their Dao of alchemy was soulless.

“As if their souls had fled, leaving behind an empty husk.

“It was as if the Fang Clan’s Dao of alchemy had been walking in a dream. Its soul had been struck too viciously by the outside world, and had been influenced by too many random alchemical philosophies. The body of the Fang Clan had no soul, and therefore rested all its hope in aimless searching... among the philosophies of the outside world.

“If things continue in this fashion, then the Fang Clan’s Dao of alchemy will gradually become a lost part of history, and will fade into nothing.

“Daos and tools must be combined. Pick up the Fang Clan’s Dao of alchemy, and restore it to its pinnacle. That is the true way to cause the Fang Clan’s Dao of Alchemy Division to rise to prominence once again.

“And thus, the three sacred medicinal pills!

“Do you understand?” His gaze returned from the distance to settle on Meng Hao. His eyes seemed to be piercing deep into Meng Hao, to be viewing his very soul.

Meng Hao was silent for a long moment and then nodded at Pill Elder.

“I think I understand some of what you mean, Senior,” he said. “Tools can be tangible or intangible. The Fang Clan’s Dao of Alchemy Division used them for many years, after which they formed a soul. That soul must return to the body, lest the Dao of Alchemy Division be submerged in ignorance.”

Pill Elder stood there quietly, unspeaking.

"However, there is one thing I don't understand, Senior," Meng Hao continued calmly. "People who comprehend the Dao, and who also absorb various schools of thought, will eventually form their own Dao. Isn't such a thing unavoidable when coming to comprehending the Dao?"

"Absorbing various schools of thinking regarding the Dao of alchemy in order to achieve your own Dao, is absolutely a path to comprehending the Dao. However... the premise is that you possess your own Dao to begin with. If you do, then of course you can absorb the ideas of others. However, if you don't, and simply attempt to tangle with the tools of the other schools of thought, then you won't be absorbing them, you will be assimilated by them."

"Tools are like a home. The Dao is the heart. When you merge tools with the Dao, then your heart is home! Fang Hao... do you really understand?" He once again looked deeply at Meng Hao.

After a moment, he casually continued, "I heard that the Grand Elder gave you two Nirvana Fruits."

It was hard to say whether or not it was a coincidence, but as soon as he began to speak those final words, the Unicorn Immortals on the mountain suddenly began to buzz loudly. If Meng Hao hadn't been standing very close to Pill Elder, he wouldn't have been able to hear clearly.

As soon as he finished speaking, Pill Elder waved his hand, causing a bag of holding to fly over and hover in front of Meng Hao.

"In there are the rewards for concocting the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill, with the exception of the Immortal treasure. Think about your exact requirements for the treasure, and tell me later. I'll make the arrangements to have it forged for you."

Meng Hao trembled. As he thought about the two exhortations just given to him by Pill Elder, he had to ask himself if he truly understood what it all meant....

"Perhaps the deeper meaning in his questions about the Dao of alchemy

are a reminder that the Nirvana Fruits are not mine,” he thought. “Or could it be that he’s indicating that there are still secrets I don’t understand about the Nirvana Fruits?” Meng Hao didn’t pursue the conversation topic. Instead, after hearing about the Immortal treasure, his eyes flickered.

After a moment’s hesitation, he said, “Senior Pill Elder, um... I really don’t need any Immortal treasures. Can I exchange that reward for something else?”

Pill Elder looked at Meng Hao for a moment, and then began to chuckle. This was the first time he had actually smiled. “What exact reward would you like to exchange it for?”

“Um....” Meng Hao cleared his throat and decided that he might as well give his idea a shot. “Senior Pill Elder, I think those Unicorn Immortals are pretty incredible. Would you mind teaching me a bit about the Dao of insects, sir?”

“Oh?” Pill Elder replied with a smile. “Well, these Unicorn Immortals have the power of Ancestral Awakening in their bloodline. I raised them for years before they reached the point where they could be trained. The Dao of insects is a top-secret magic. Even though you’re a clan member, you would still need to undergo an assessment before you could start to work with it.”

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. Considering that Pill Elder hadn’t refused him outright, that meant that there was a bit of hope. As soon as he had neared this mountain, those Unicorn Immortals had drawn his attention. Ever since he’d returned from the Ruins of Immortality, there had been an idea percolating deep within him.

He had long since become quite envious of that cloud of beetles he had seen in the Ruins of Immortality. Ever since, he had thought that if he could wave his hand and cause tens of millions of black beetles to fill the sky, then any opponent he faced would instantly become as petrified as he had been that year. With a mere thought, he could instantly turn his enemies into nothing but ash.

The mere thought of being able to do something like that one day, left Meng Hao very excited.

This was especially true considering that there were several black beetles currently inside his bag of holding. Their life force was incredibly powerful, and they had not died, but rather remained dormant inside his bag of holding after being sealed.

“Senior, look, you know... I’m the kind of old-fashioned cultivator who doesn’t like to rely on external weapons.” As he spoke, his tone continued to grow more somber. “If you start using magical items, then eventually you’ll start to rely on them. The Dao of insects is different! It’s like a divine ability, an academic art, even more so, a Dao!

“Senior, I don’t want any magical weapons. I just seek the Dao.” As he spoke his final sentence, he clasped hands and bowed deeply.

In his mind, he felt quite satisfied with his eloquence, especially in the delivery of that last line.

Pill Elder looked at Meng Hao for a long moment, then waved his right hand. A jade slip flew out to hover in front of Meng Hao. It was emerald green, and one side was carved with the image of a Unicorn Immortal. The creature seemed matchlessly vicious, with a monstrous killing aura.

The other side was carved with another Unicorn Immortal. However, this one was extremely placid, and looked like it wouldn’t even hurt a fly.

“Take a look at the first of the three volumes on the Dao of insects. If you have the talent, I’ll teach you.

“You’ll also find a command medallion in that bag of holding. According to the rules of the Dao of Alchemy Division, anyone who concocts the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill will automatically become a tier 8 alchemist. Your status in the clan is now equal to a Clan Elder. You may also select any mountain in the Inner Mountains to serve as your Immortal’s cave.”

With that, he waved his sleeve, causing a gentle wind to materialize. It swirled around Meng Hao, causing his vision to swim. When it became clear again, he was far away from the mountain.

He looked back toward the mountain peak in the center of all the other mountains. For just a moment, he could make out all of the caves on the peak. Eyes glittering, he took a deep breath, clasped hands and bowed.

Then, he left.

He flew out of the inner mountains, during which time he encountered several alchemists. As soon as they saw Meng Hao, their expressions filled with awe, and they immediately clasped hands in greeting. The story of Meng Hao concocting the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill had already spread throughout the Fang Clan, and everyone knew about it.

There were some people who hadn't been convinced by Meng Hao charging all the way to the seventh level of the Medicine Pavilion. Now, though... Meng Hao had concocted a legendary medicinal pill. In Dao of Alchemy Division, he was as stable as Mount Tai, and not a single voice of doubt could be heard regarding him.

In the world of cultivation, respect is given to the powerful. It was no different in the Dao of Alchemy Division!

Just as Meng Hao was about to leave the inner mountains, he suddenly stopped in place and turned his head to look at one particularly beautiful mountain peak. The entire mountain was jade green, and its snow-capped peak was surrounded by swirling clouds.

Almost in the exact moment that he turned to look at the mountain, he heard a miserable, bloodcurdling shriek echo out from within the misty mountain.

That scream was not the scream of a cultivator, but rather... it came from the beak of a beautiful peacock.

At the same time, a bellow of rage could be heard that obviously came from the mouth of an old woman.

"You damned mutt of a bird! It's time we fight! I'm going to refine you into a pill!!"

Next, the arrogant and despotic voice of a parrot could be heard squawking out. "Do you know how many years Lord Fifth has swept across

Jianghu? Huh? Look, you old crone, Lord Fifth screwed a hole through the Heavens before you were even born!

“Do you know who Lord Fifth’s master is? Well I’ll tell you, and you’re gonna be scared to death! Lord Fifth’s master is Fang Hao!”

# Chapter 927: The Shore of Brightmoon Lake

Meng Hao's face was unsightly. Feeling somewhat helpless, he watched a multicolored parrot flapping its wings as it flew through the air. A small bell could be seen attached to its claw, and the parrot looked very pleased with itself. It somehow seemed licentious, and even had a black strip of cloth wrapped around its head, covering one of its eyes. The remaining visible eye gleamed brightly as it flew out from the mountain peak.

"You just wait for Lord Fifth, you old hag. And as for you, my beloved concubine, don't worry, Lord Fifth will be coming back for you. I'll risk everything to rescue you from this place!"

Behind the parrot was the tier 7 alchemist, the old woman. Her face was a mass of fury as she shot after the parrot at top speed. Behind her was a beautiful young woman, clad in a white robe, the picture of purity and innocence. This was the same young woman who Meng Hao had encountered after challenging the seventh level of the Medicine Pavilion, the clan Junior Sister named Wan'er.

Miserable shrieking could be heard in the distance, and Meng Hao could just barely make out a beautiful peacock, gasping and struggling in vain to rise to its feet. From the look of the situation, it had just experienced some unimaginable catastrophe.

Meng Hao sighed, feeling quite sorry for the peacock. Anything with feathers that showed up in front of the parrot would find it difficult to escape the bird and its fiendish hobbies.

As soon as the parrot flew out, it caught sight of Meng Hao, and its uncovered eye lit up. It hurried over and began to cry out plaintively.

"Master, save me! Master, this old hag is out of control! She's trying to kill me! Save me, master!" As the parrot cried out, the bell attached to its claw suddenly made a popping sound and transformed into the meat jelly, which also began to cry out to Meng Hao.

"Master, here you are, finally! There's a bully following us! Master, she's a real bully!"

Not too far behind, the furious old woman caught sight of Meng Hao, as did the young woman in the white robe. The young woman's jaw dropped in surprise, as if the Meng Hao in her mind couldn't possibly have anything to do with this shameless parrot.

Clearing his throat, Meng Hao hurriedly backed away, and then made to continue on his way as if he hadn't seen anything that was happening.

"Master, save me...." the parrot screeched immediately, flying toward Meng Hao at top speed.

Meng Hao waved his hand, and his body disappeared in a minor teleportation. When he reappeared off in the distance, the parrot immediately changed directions and continued to speed toward him. As for Meng Hao, he suddenly seemed to radiate an air of righteousness. Expression solemn, he began to speak.

"I do not know you, evildoer! Exactly who the hell are you?" he said. Then a slightly confused expression appeared on his face as he looked at the pursuing old woman.

"Meng Hao!" squawked the parrot, glancing back the old woman, who was about to catch up. "I have spirit stones!"

"Hold your tongue, evildoer!" said Meng Hao, stopping in place. His face was somber, as if he was the sole representative of justice. "There is no enmity between us, and yet you try to frame me? Well, never mind. I might as well just put you in your place right now!" With that, he waved his right hand.

Meng Hao didn't even have a chance to unleash a divine ability. Before anything could actually happen, the parrot let out a miserable shriek, and then its body went stiff, as if it had just been seriously injured. Then, it shot directly into Meng Hao's sleeve.

Meng Hao cleared his throat and inwardly cursed the parrot's unconvincing performance.

“Senior,” he said to the old woman, cautiously backing up. “This bird is vile and detestable. I’m just on my way back from visiting Pill Elder, after having been fortunate enough to become a tier 8 alchemist. Junior will help you take care of this bird, don’t worry.”

The old woman’s cultivation base was so profound that Meng Hao couldn’t assess it. In the Dao of Alchemy Division, alchemy was the true Dao, and one’s cultivation base played a mere supporting role. However, because of all the life-or-death scenarios that Meng Hao had faced, he still edged backward carefully as if guarding against any contingencies, simultaneously flashing his tier 8 alchemist’s command medallion.

The old woman looked at Meng Hao backing away, and said nothing. Eventually, he transformed into a beam of light that fled into the distance. At that point, the old woman’s eyes flashed.

The young woman hesitated for a moment, then quietly said, “Grand-aunt, that bird....”

“Just forget about it,” said the old woman, turning to head back toward the mountain. The young woman followed.

Along the way, the young woman couldn’t refrain from asking, “Grand-aunt, Fang Hao...?”

The old woman did nothing other than shake her head. A flash of insight could be seen deep within her eyes. From the moment Meng Hao had challenged the seventh level of the Medicine Pavilion, she knew that he would be a new force coming to the fore of the Dao of Alchemy Division. Then he concocted the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill, which left her shaken inwardly, and also thoroughly convinced that Fang Hao would be a blazing sun of the Dao of Alchemy Division!

She wasn’t sure if he was the type of person to nurse grudges. Because of the level of her cultivation base, she had been aware all along that the parrot and the meat jelly belonged to him. Furthermore, she had intentionally driven them out at the exact moment in which Meng Hao had been passing by.

Her entire goal had been to resolve any feelings of resentment Meng

Hao might have toward her.

She was much higher than him in terms of clan seniority, had a profound cultivation base, and had been famous for many years. Therefore, she was well versed in finding clever ways to resolve problems, and the scene that had played out just now was just the method she had come up with to resolve her issues with Meng Hao.

Meng Hao continued flying through the Dao of Alchemy Division. When he realized that the old woman wasn't pursuing him, his eyes flickered. He, of course, understood her intention.

As they emerged from the Dao of Alchemy Division, the parrot's spirits seemed to lift. It flew out of his sleeve and arrogantly cried, "You just wait for Lord Fifth, you old hag! Lord Fifth will be back!"

Off to the side, the meat jelly nodded its head vigorously. For the meat jelly to act in such a way was clear evidence of the sufferings these two dunces had endured in recent days.

However, as soon as the parrot finished speaking, Meng Hao's right hand shot out, grabbed the parrot, and dragged it in front of him. The parrot's eyes bulged.

"What are you doing!? What are you grabbing your Lord Fifth for!?"

"What did you say just now about spirit stones?" Meng Hao asked coldly. Whenever he and the parrot interacted, it was never with courtesy.

"Spirit stones?" the parrot pretended to be confused. "What spirit stones?"

Meng Hao glared at the parrot, and then suddenly, a bashful expression appeared on his face. The parrot's eyes immediately went wide, and it began to shiver.

The meat jelly gasped and let out a muffled shriek.

"It's that expression again! Finished! We're finished! Whenever that expression appears, it means the end is near! The bird is really done for this time...."

The parrot's eyes filled with fear, and before Meng Hao could even say anything, it fawningly said, "Hahaha! I'm just playing around with you! Spirit stones... ah, spirit stones. That old hag has a whole vein of spirit stones underneath that mountain of hers. Whenever you feel like going to steal them, Meng Hao, I'll help you dig them up."

When Meng Hao heard the words 'vein of spirit stones,' his eyes began to shine. He then began to ask about the specifics.

One man, one bird, and one meat jelly flew back toward the ancestral mansion, conversing with each other in hushed tones.

By now, evening was falling. Off in the distance, the setting sun filled the sky with golden light. When Meng Hao got back to the ancestral mansion, he saw numerous clan members heading toward the East District. Meng Hao looked in that direction and suddenly remembered what was going to be happening in the morning.

"East Ascension Sun!" Muttering to himself, he changed directions and flew toward the East District. The parrot perched on his shoulder, and the meat jelly transformed into a bell and attached itself to the parrot's claw.

Meanwhile, in the East District's East Ascension Pagoda, Fang Wei smiled as he chatted with the various Chosen. Not once did he mentioned the event which had just sent the entire Fang Clan astir.

Although nothing seemed unusual about the way the other Chosen were carrying themselves, all of them had long since caught on to the fact that something unusual had happened. The mere fact that Fang Wei had brushed the matter aside was what had led them to this conclusion in the first place.

At one point, somebody brought up Fang Mu again. Just like before, Fang Wei didn't openly admit that he was Fang Mu, and yet, he looked over and gave Li Ling'er an apologetic smile. Quite a few Chosen noticed this, and began to consider what it meant.

Li Ling'er snorted coldly, and even more derision could be seen in her expression. She was even more convinced than Sun Hai that Meng Hao was Fang Mu. She hated Fang Mu deeply, but when she looked at Fang

Wei, her expression was one of ridicule. She seemed to be sickened by him.

When Fang Wei saw the look on her face, his eyes flickered imperceptibly. He suddenly changed the topic and began to chat about the East Ascension Sun.

Sun Hai's eyes flashed, but when he thought about how the girl he adored was a member of the Fang Clan, he didn't say anything. Instead, he pulled another of the Fang Clan Chosen off to the side and asked whether or not he knew a member of the Fang Clan clan named Fang Yu.

The sky was growing dark, and more and more members of the Fang Clan clustered together around Brightmoon Lake. Originally, they had been waiting quietly, but now they were all discussing the matter of Meng Hao concocting the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill. Although the Dao Bell had long since ceased to toll, the sound of it still rang within their hearts.

"I can't believe Fang Hao actually concocted a Skypalace Sunspirit Pill!"

"That's one of the three sacred pills! I never could have imagined that he would be able to concoct one of them!"

"When Fang Hao returned, I didn't really think much of him. He was kind of quiet. But now he's causing all sorts of waves!"

Words such as these echoed out constantly. Fang Wei's expression was the same as ever, making it impossible to determine what he was thinking. In contrast, Fang Yunyi's face only continued to grow darker. Then he looked over at Fang Xi near the lakeshore, chatting excitedly with the clan members around him, and he snorted coldly.

A cold gleam flickered in his eyes, and his lips twitched into an icy smile; the people he had arranged to take care of Fang Xi were now closing in.

"The direct bloodline... is crap! They had their glory in the past, but now they're in decline. The Fang Clan... is no longer a place where they hold the upper hand!" Fang Yunyi snorted again. "Today is the day when I humiliate Fang Xi of the direct bloodline!" His eyes narrowed.

Meanwhile, Fang Xi stood in the crowd, excitedly flaunting his recent

experiences to the clan members standing next to him.

“Of all the people over all the years in the Dao of Alchemy Division, nobody has ever been able to concoct that medicinal pill. But my Coz concocted it!

“He had a 30,000-meter Bloodline Gatebeam, and he even challenged the seventh level of the Medicine Pavilion. And then he concocted the legendary Skypalace Sunspirit Pill. That’s my Coz! Fang Hao!” The other clan members panted as they heard the stories of Meng Hao. More and more people were elevating their personal estimation of Meng Hao’s status to the same level as Fang Wei.

About this time, two young men appeared nearby, pushing their way through the crowd. Their expressions were icily arrogant as they neared Fang Xi, then rudely waved their hands, causing a burst of wind to materialize. It descended onto Fang Xi, causing his face to flicker. He tried to fight back, but was no match. He made a slight grunt as he was involuntarily shoved backward ten paces.

“The clan has ordered that it is prohibited to be loud and disorderly during the rise of the East Ascension Sun!” said one of the two young men, his eyes cold. “Anyone who violates the rule will be stripped of the qualifications to observe!”

“You....” said Fang Xi, looking up with rage in his eyes. However, when he saw who the two young men were, his face fell. The other clan members in the area also looked shocked, and immediately backed up.

# Chapter 928: You Stick With Me!

The young men who had pushed Fang Xi back wore long black robes decorated with images of a moon. There seemed to be an especially stern and forbidding air about them, an icy coldness that caused anyone they looked at to feel as if they were being stared at by a viper.

Furthermore, they had stage 3 Immortal cultivation bases, and emanated amorphous ripples that gave them the appearance of mighty Immortals.

As soon as the surrounding clan members saw who the two young men were, their faces flickered and their hearts filled with awe. They slowly backed up.

“They’re Blackmoon Guards!”

“Lots of Chosen from other sects are here for the East Ascension Sun, and the Blackmoon Guards have been tasked with keeping things orderly!”

“There are nine guard corps in the Fang Clan, four of which are stationed off-planet, and five of which have jurisdiction here on Planet East Victory. Of those five, the Blackmoon Guards and the Violetsun Guards are responsible for the ancestral mansion!”

The nine guard corps of the Fang Clan had each earned glorious achievements in battle, and had shaken the Ninth Mountain and Sea. As for the Blackmoon Guards, they were known for being sinister and vicious, just like vipers.

That was their reputation among outsiders and within the Fang Clan itself. Everyone feared the Blackmoon Guards.

Fang Xi looked at the two young men, and his face flickered. Whatever words he had been about to say stuck in his throat. He might be from the direct bloodline, but everyone in the clan knew that the direct bloodline was on the decline. He... could not afford to offend the Blackmoon Guards.

“Fang Xi,” said one of the young men, his voice cold, “for loud and disorderly conduct on the shore of Brightmoon Lake, for disturbing public order, and for losing face for the clan in front of guests from other sects,

you will move your ass 300 meters back from this location!" The young man spoke without the slightest bit of courtesy.

"If you dare to step within 300 meters of any Blackmoon Guard," said the other young man, his eyes brimming with scorn, "then it will be taken as an act of insurrection! Fang Xi, get the hell out of here!" With that, he waved his hand, causing another shocking wind to appear, which swept Fang Xi up and forced him back.

Fang Xi was powerless to resist, and in the blink of an eye had fallen back nearly three hundred meters. There was complete silence as all of the surrounding clan members looked over at Fang Xi.

He finally came to a stop at 299 meters. His face was pale, and he was trembling. Rage flickered on his face as he glared murderously at the two young men.

He was no fool, and knew that these two had intentionally come to humiliate him in front of the other clan members. Word would quickly spread that he had been unceremoniously dismissed by them.

What was especially obvious... was the sinister way in which they went about humiliating him. With their cultivation bases, they could have easily pushed him 300 meters away. Instead, they only pushed him 299 meters, making sure that Fang Xi would have to voluntarily step back the final meter.

Fang Xi's eyes were bright red, and he panted as he glared at the two young men nearly 300 meters away. He did not wish to step back, but he also knew that clan rules took precedence over anything and everything. The Blackmoon Guards were responsible for keeping order in the area, and if he defied them openly, they would have a vast array of options regarding how to deal with him. Most important of all was that the Blackmoon Guards... were under the direct control of Fang Wei's branch of the family.

Fang Xi clenched his fists tightly and, as everyone watched, bowed his head and stepped back one last meter until he was at the 300-meter mark.

That final step was a movement that crushed Fang Xi's dignity, and

humiliated his bloodline. However, Fang Xi had to accept it; there was no way he could fight back.

He stood there trembling as everyone looked at him. Not a word was spoken by anyone, although many of the onlookers sighed inwardly.

As for the two young Blackmoon Guards, they laughed coldly and then, ignoring Fang Xi, turned and left.

Everyone who was watching assumed that the chiding of Fang Xi was now over. Even Fang Xi assumed that by bowing his head, he would face no further difficulties....

However, it was at this point that two Blackmoon Guards suddenly appeared next to Fang Xi. Instantly, they waved their hands, causing their cultivation bases to surge with power. A fierce wind kicked up, wrapping around Fang Xi and driving him backward yet again.

This time, he was yet again sent back 299 meters.

“The Blackmoon Guard has already warned you once,” said one of the two, his voice cool. “You must remain 300 meters away from any location we occupy! We’re standing here now, so scram!”

“YOU!!” Fang Xi was trembling, and his eyes were bright red.

The two Blackmoon Guards laughed at Fang Xi’s reaction, and their eyes radiated cold glows. It was as if they were just waiting for Fang Xi to fight back. Although they might fear his father, they had received orders under the auspices of Prince Wei. Besides, they were responsible for maintaining order here, so if Fang Xi did anything rash, their backers would shield them from any consequences.

Fang Xi was in a rage, and he wanted to cast everything aside and fight back. But then he thought about how often his father sighed about the decline of the direct bloodline. Fang Xi didn’t have a strong personality, and in fact, was often gentle. Not wanting to cause any further troubles for his father, he bitterly took another step back.

As he stepped back, a hint of dejection could be seen in his eyes.

It was at this point that more than ten Blackmoon Guards suddenly appeared. The crowds stepped back, making a wide path for them. The Blackmoon Guards stared at Fang Xi with cold eyes.

Fang Xi lowered his head and continued to retreat. 300 meters. 1,500 meters. Soon he was almost out of the crowd entirely, a full 3,000 meters away from Brightmoon Lake. The Blackmoon guards stared contemptuously at Fang Xi, who was by now figuratively scarred and battered.

“One more step!” said the Blackmoon Guard closest to Fang Xi, his voice cold. Currently, they were separated by 299 meters.

Nothing could be heard but silence. Many of the Fang Clan members sighed inwardly, but said nothing. The Fang Clan’s direct bloodline was on the decline, and Fang Wei’s was on the rise. That was current state of affairs.

Fang Xi laughed bitterly as he realized that he couldn’t stay here any longer. He was just about to turn and leave when suddenly, a hand appeared behind him and patted him lightly on the back, preventing him from taking that final step.

At the same time, a calm voice could be heard from behind him.

“What’s wrong, Fang Xi?”

When Fang Xi heard that voice, a tremor ran through him. He turned back to see that Meng Hao was behind him, having appeared there at some undetermined point in time. Perched on Meng Hao’s shoulder was the parrot, who winked at Fang Xi.

Meng Hao had appeared without the slightest sound, and not a single one of the nearby clan members had even noticed. All they saw was Meng Hao suddenly standing there, right behind Fang Xi.

The more than ten Blackmoon Guards looked over with fiercely glinting eyes. They were shocked, because even they had no idea how Meng Hao had appeared there. He had literally shown up in the blink of an eye.

His appearance on the scene immediately caused a stir among the Fang

Clan members.

“It’s Fang Hao!”

“What a strange way to make an entrance! He didn’t make any ripples of displacement at all!” Many people felt their hearts beginning to pound. Meng Hao had just concocted the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill, and had caused the Fang Clan’s Dao Bell to ring. By now, Meng Hao was a person many of the clan members were pondering deeply.

“Coz....” said Fang Xi, looking over at Meng Hao. His expression was one of grievance, the kind of look that appears when a dear relative shows up right when you are being picked on.

Meng Hao smiled lightly, then patted Fang Xi’s shoulder. However, within Meng Hao’s heart, icy coldness surged up to monstrous heights. A moment ago, he had been off in the distance, watching Fang Xi being pushed back by the sinister Blackmoon Guards.

“Fang Xi, you stick with me. Let’s see who tries to stand in my way.” With that, Meng Hao stepped in front of Fang Xi and then began to walk forward. Fang Xi took a deep breath. Eyes filling with determination, he began to follow Meng Hao.

The dozen or so Blackmoon Guards watched with various expressions as Meng Hao walked forward. When he had walked about thirty meters toward them, two of the Blackmoon Guards snorted and then closed in on him.

“You may approach,” said one of them, “but Fang Xi disturbed the public peace here, and if he dares to step within 300 meters of us, he’ll be punished!” In the blink of an eye, the two Blackmoon Guards were right in front of Meng Hao.

Their words still hung in the air as Meng Hao suddenly lifted his right hand and pushed it out in front of him. Rumbling could be heard as a gale force wind sprang up. An incorporeal Flying Rain-Dragon suddenly appeared, roaring soundlessly as it shot toward the two Blackmoon Guards. In the blink of an eye, it was upon them. Their faces flickered, and they fought back with all the power they could muster. However, blood

sprayed from their mouths as they were tossed to the side.

This development immediately sent the crowds into an uproar. It must be noted that even though the Blackmoon Guards had targeted Fang Xi, the only thing they did was drive him away. They did not attack or injure him. In sharp contrast, Meng Hao attacked with domineering force, immediately injuring the two Blackmoon Guards.

Fang Xi instantly started to get nervous, but Meng Hao's expression was as cold as ever. As he proceeded forward, the rest of the dozen or so Blackmoon Guards up ahead began to head toward him.

"You've disturbed the peace and even dared to hurt people! Fang Hao, it doesn't matter if you're backed by the Dao of Alchemy Division, you will still face the clan's punishment this day!"

The dozen or so Blackmoon Guards bore down on Meng Hao. When they were only a few dozen meters away, brilliant beams of light suddenly exploded from Meng Hao's eyes, and he said one thing.

"SCREW OFF!"

The words rang out like claps of thunder. Rumbling filled the area, and even the Chosen in the East Ascension Pavilion heard it and looked over.

The Blackmoon Guards in front of Meng Hao felt as if some enormous, invisible mountain was crushing down onto them. Blood sprayed from their mouths, and deafening roars filled their ears. They suddenly felt as if their cultivation bases had become unstable. It didn't matter that they were in the Immortal Realm; they began to tremble as a terrifying wind swept over them, sending them tumbling backwards. Meng Hao's one sentence caused their minds to reel, and sent them flying away.

The surrounding Fang Clan members were completely shocked.

Fang Xi looked on, stupefied, as Meng Hao calmly proceeded to walk forward. The crowds immediately parted, making a path for him that led all the way to Brightmoon Lake!

On the island in the middle of the lake, within the East Ascension Pagoda, Fang Wei and the others around him all saw the crowd part as if

some sort of Immortal Divinity had appeared.

Meng Hao strode out, back straight, long hair draped over his shoulders like a cloak. His expression was grave and stern, as if his rise to prominence gave him a blinding aura that no one could ignore.

When the Chosen in the pavilion saw that it was Meng Hao who was walking toward them, a variety of different expressions could be seen.

Li Ling'er's face flickered with hatred as she stared at him.

Sun Hai's eyes went wide, he took a deep breath, and subconsciously edged backward.

Song Luodan and Taiyang Zi saw Meng Hao at the same time, and their eyes shone with piercing light.

Then there was Fan Dong'er, whose gaze turned as sharp as a dagger. In that moment, she had no stronger desire than the wish to chop Meng Hao into tiny pieces. She began to pant, and it suddenly became impossible for her to maintain her previously stoic expression.

"Meng Hao...."

# Chapter 929: Momentum

Fang Wei's gaze immediately fell onto Meng Hao. His expression was the same as ever, although his pupils constricted. He wasn't surprised to see that Meng Hao had shown up. Back in their initial meeting in the main temple, the moment they looked at each other, Fang Wei could tell that Meng Hao was not a pushover. However, he hadn't paid much attention to him, and had in fact disregarded him. It wasn't until Meng Hao rose to prominence in the Dao of Alchemy Division that he had been forced to take him seriously.

That was especially true now, when he was suddenly acting so aggressively. Fang Wei snorted coldly.

A moment later, his expression was seemingly as placid as ever, without any hint of disturbance.

Wang Mu was also there in the East Ascension Pavilion. When he saw Meng Hao, his eyes shone with a sharp light, and his desire to do battle increased.

Fang Yunyi stood there as well, looking venomously in Meng Hao's direction, a cold smile twisting the corners of his lips.

The crowds surrounding Brightmoon Lake were in an uproar. They made way for Meng Hao as he strode slowly forward, Fang Xi in tow, who was both excited and nervous. The Blackmoon Guards were one of the nine guard corps of the Fang Clan, and were responsible for maintaining peace. They would most certainly not respond kindly to Meng Hao provoking them.

"Coz...." he whispered. Suddenly, whistling sounds could be heard as more than thirty figures closed in on Meng Hao from all directions.

These were more Blackmoon Guards, the keepers of the peace! As they flew toward Meng Hao, their cultivation bases roared with power; shockingly, all of these cultivators were in the Immortal Realm!

Two of them were even stage 5 Immortals, and as they all closed in at

high speed, they unleashed divine abilities and magical techniques. Brilliant light shot out in all directions, exerting intense pressure.

“How brazen!”

“You dare to attack the Blackmoon Guard? You dare to sow public chaos!? It doesn’t matter who you are, kneel now and prepare to be sent to the dungeon to be tortured!”

As the shouts echoed out, Fang Xi started to look anxious.

However, Meng Hao’s expression didn’t change at all. Instead, he smiled coldly.

“It seems that even random nobodies dare to squawk in front of me,” he said. “Could it be because I haven’t used force often enough in the clan?” With that, he stepped forward. As soon as his foot touched the ground, he transformed into a bright beam of light.

The beam of light was gold-colored, and inside, Meng Hao took the form of a golden roc. A droning could be heard as he shot toward the incoming Blackmoon Guards at high speed.

In the blink of an eye, he slammed into three of them. The roc’s talons slashed, ripping the air and causing cracking sounds to ring out. The three Blackmoon Guards’ faces fell and blood sprayed from their mouths and their bodies twisted before they could even fight back. They were instantly sent flying backward by Meng Hao’s talons, powerless to resist.

Even as they flew backward, coughing up blood, they looked back at Meng Hao with expressions of shock.

“How... how could he be so strong!?!?”

Meng Hao didn’t pause for even a moment; he instantly swept towards the other guards. The roc flapped its wings, and in the blink of an eye, five more Blackmoon Guards let out muffled grunts. Blood sprayed from their mouths as they were thrown into the air, and looks of shock covered their faces as they looked at roc-form Meng Hao.

“What cultivation base does he have? Even the combined power of all

five of us can't stop him!"

To describe all of these actions takes quite a few sentences, but these eight people were injured and sent tumbling hundreds of meters away in a brief flash. Eight people had been injured and flung over 300 meters away. Now, there were seven Blackmoon Guards left in front of Meng Hao.

Among those seven were the two stage 5 Immortals, who were now panting. Their expressions that of astonishment, they gritted their teeth and joined voices to call out, "Blackmoon Formation!"

Immediately, the other five of their number joined with the first two, combining together to form the shape of a moon!

Because their clothing was black, that moon... was also black!

A black moon!

As soon as the moon appeared, a monstrous energy surged out that weighed down on everyone in the area. The Chosen in the East Ascension Pavilion all looked on with strange gleams in their eyes.

"The Blackmoon Guards' first fusion art!" said Taiyang Zi, his eyes flickering.

"Rumor has it," said Sun Hai, eyeing the black moon, "that with this art, seven people make the formation, seven formations make a magic spell, seven spells make a divine ability, seven divine abilities make a Dao!"

Others had similar reactions, although Li Ling'er simply watched with coldly flickering eyes.

The crowds surrounding Brightmoon Lake were also in a commotion.

Fang Xi's face fell, and Fang Yunyi smiled an overtly sinister smile.

In that moment....

Meng Hao, in golden roc form, didn't hesitate for a moment. He charged toward the black moon, and as he did, the roc turned blurry and transformed into numerous mountains. The mountains linked together to form a chain of mountains that then crushed down onto the black moon!

This was none other than the Mountain Consuming Incantation!

From a distance, it looked like massive mountain peaks suppressing the very moon in the Heavens. Boundless, enormous mountains filled the sky, and as for that black moon, it was visibly shrinking.

Everyone watching was astonished, especially the Chosen in the East Ascension Pavilion who had previously crossed swords with Meng Hao. When they saw the mountains, they were reminded of that year in the lands of South Heaven, when Meng Hao had single-handedly swept over all of the Chosen. Despite being chased by over a thousand opponents, he had been as valiant as ever.

Booms echoed out in all directions.

The black moon only lasted for the space of a few breaths under the crushing pressure of the mountains. Subsequently, it shattered into pieces, and the seven people inside coughed up blood and tumbled backward, their faces filled with terror.

The mountains faded away, and Meng Hao stepped out from within them. He once again transformed into a beam of light that shot forward.

“Fang Xi, keep up!” he said loftily. “I’m taking you to the pavilion on the lake!” To everyone who heard his booming voice, it was as if Meng Hao was the only person in existence.

There were many clan members who suddenly felt as if they were meeting Meng Hao for the first time. Their hearts trembled with shock, and even Fang Xi was panting. Gritting his teeth, he flew to follow Meng Hao.

The two of them proceeded onward toward Brightmoon Lake, Meng Hao in the lead, Fang Xi following.

In the East Ascension Pavilion in the middle of Brightmoon Lake, the various Chosen were all looking at Meng Hao. Regardless of whatever conflicts they had with him, as of this moment all of them had no choice but to admit that Meng Hao... was a blazing sun!

Fang Wei stood there quietly, his eyes icy. Fang Yunyi, on the other hand,

had an expression filled with incredible venom.

Fang Hong was already in awe of Meng Hao, and subconsciously stepped backward, as did Fang Xiangshan. Fang Donghan was secretly excited; this outcome was exactly what he wanted, a fight between Meng Hao and Fang Wei.

As everyone watched Meng Hao nearing the edge of Brightmoon Lake, all of a sudden, a person appeared on the shore.

It was a middle-aged man wearing a black robe embroidered with two moons. He had the flourishing cultivation base of a stage 6 Immortal.

"You ignominious fool!" the man said coldly. "Back down!" This stage 6 Immortal was the leader of the Blackmoon Guards in this area. He stood there, brow furrowed, doing nothing to conceal his loathing of Meng Hao. Even as he spoke, he pushed his hand out in front of him, causing shocking pressure to roil out. At the same time, an enormous, illusory hand appeared that shot toward Meng Hao.

"I'm from the direct bloodline of the Fang Clan," Meng Hao replied, "I'm the eldest grandson of this generation, with a supreme status in the clan. You're the one who'll be backing down!" Instead of slowing down, he sped up. At the same time, he clenched his right hand into a fist and punched out into the air nine times.

Nine Heavens Destruction!

RUMMMBLLLE!

Massive roaring filled the air as his Dharma Idol suddenly materialized behind him. 15,000 meters tall, shocking to the extreme, it also punched out. Nine blows descended toward the middle-aged man, seemingly capable of shattering Heaven and Earth.

When Meng Hao's attacks slammed into the palm strike, the hand shattered. The man's face fell as Meng Hao's fist continued onward the man himself.

Dozens of blows were exchanged in the blink of an eye. Each exchange caused the man's face to flicker; his expression was now being taken over

by fear as he realized that his cultivation base was being weakened, as was his life force. It was being absorbed by Meng Hao!

In the end, blood sprayed from his mouth, and he was forced to retreat.

In that moment, Meng Hao grabbed Fang Xi. As everyone watched, he flew up into the air... directly out over Brightmoon Lake!

As soon as Meng Hao was airborne, all of the dozens of Blackmoon Guards in the crowd urgently took flight and sped toward Meng Hao. It didn't matter if he was a fellow clan member, his flagrant challenge of the Blackmoon Guards was something that could not go unanswered.

However, Meng Hao completely ignored them. He dragged the astonished Fang Xi through the air, transforming into a long beam of light that shot over Brightmoon Lake toward the East Ascension Pavilion.

Inside the pavilion, the Chosen were all shocked. Li Ling'er clenched her jaw, and a cold light could be seen in Fan Dong'er's eyes. Wang Mu was itching to fight, and Song Luodan's face was icy. As for Sun Hai, he was getting nervous. Taiyang Zi and the others felt their energy surging as Meng Hao sped toward them.

Fang Wei frowned. Fang Yunyi was panting; seeing Meng Hao's powerful momentum caused him to subconsciously step backward.

Everyone watched as Meng Hao carried Fang Xi across the water. In the blink of an eye, he was almost at East Ascension Pavilion. Just when he was about to set foot inside....

"You don't qualify to be here," Fang Wei said calmly.

He took a step forward and then struck out with his palm!

The palm strike unexpectedly... caused everyone to feel as if the land were quaking and the mountains were trembling. The surface of Brightmoon Lake churned, as if some ancient being were awakening underneath and was now emitting a terrifying aura.

The palm strike looked ordinary, and yet as soon as it was delivered, a golden magical symbol appeared outside of the East Ascension Pavilion.

The symbol was like the sun, instantly causing everything outside to turn golden.

In response to the palm strike, all of the Chosen in the pavilion, even Fan Dong'er and Zhou Xin from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto, narrowed their eyes in concentration. Various expressions could be seen; the explosive energy of Fang Wei's attack left everyone shocked.

This was even more the case when people realized that Fang Wei's attack contained an aura of reincarnation. It was almost like a natural law, as if... anyone who opposed Fang Wei was actually an enemy of the Heavens!

A sense of crisis rose up in Meng Hao, and his eyes widened. He released Fang Xi, simultaneously causing the Black White Pearls to swirl out. Furthermore, a Blood qi rose up, transforming into the head of a Blood Demon. All of it coalesced onto Meng Hao's hand, after which he also... struck out with his palm.

Rumbling filled the air in the space between Meng Hao and Fang Wei in the East Ascension Pavilion.

This was the first time that Meng Hao and Fang Wei exchanged blows!

# Chapter 930: I've Missed All of You!

It was a collision of gold and blood!

It was a struggle between the power of reincarnation and the Black White Pearls!

This was Fang Wei... versus Meng Hao! Their first battle!

Rumbling filled the air as the colors of gold and blood smashed into each other. The night sky suddenly grew bright as the power of reincarnation and the Black White Pearls collided, causing Heaven and Earth to tremble. Massive roaring echoed out in all directions.

The Blood Demon head collapsed, and the world of gold shattered. The sensation of reincarnation faded away... and Meng Hao's Black White Pearls also collapsed.

A tremor ran through Meng Hao, and his Eternal stratum immediately surged into action, giving him the power to completely shrug off the blow. What all onlookers saw was that Fang Wei's palm strike did nothing to stop him! He didn't even pause... he just stepped right into the East Ascension Pavilion!

Fang Wei's eyes brimmed with icy coldness, and his face had turned a bit pale. Although he had been separated from Meng Hao's counterstrike to his palm attack, he was still struck by the backlash.

Most shocking of all was that this was Brightmoon Lake, a place where Fang Wei practiced cultivation. He had formed a resonance with the lake water, and therefore held the upper hand. Furthermore, Meng Hao had been protecting Fang Xi.

In the end, however, it was really difficult to determine which of them was actually more powerful!

Almost in the same moment that Meng Hao set foot into the pavilion, dozens of Blackmoon Guards flew out across the lake toward him.

Meng Hao completely ignored them. Instead, his cold gaze flitted across the crowd and came to fall on Fang Wei.

“Junior Cousin Fang Wei, why is it that I’m not qualified to enter this pavilion?”

“Anyone who is being pursued by the Blackmoon Guards is naturally not qualified to set foot inside,” Fang Wei replied coolly. The Blackmoon Guards were closing in on the pavilion, and even more were now converging further out beyond the lakeshore. Furthermore, it would only be a short time before their true experts arrived.

In his heart, Fang Wei laughed coldly. He truly wanted to see how Meng Hao could possibly resolve the current situation.

Fang Xi’s face was ashen as he stood there next to Meng Hao, panting. He had never been inside the East Ascension Pavilion before, and would normally have been very excited. Right now though, the Blackmoon Guards were moments away from catching up, and when he thought about what would happen then, he couldn’t help but take a deep breath and brace himself to go for broke.

He had already decided that because all of this was happening because of him, he would take full responsibility, and make sure that the clan didn’t cause any problems for Meng Hao.

“Is that so?” replied Meng Hao, smiling. Sharp whistling sounds could be heard as seven or eight Blackmoon Guards shot through the air behind him. Their expressions brimmed with killing intent, and they were just about to attack when...

Meng Hao casually raised his hand and showed something to the Blackmoon Guards behind him.

Then, without even turning his head, he coldly barked, “Screw off!”

As his voice echoed out, the Blackmoon Guards outside of the pavilion saw the item in his hand. Their faces fell, and they suddenly stopped in place, staring in disbelief at Meng Hao’s hand, and the object therein.

Then they began to pant. Meanwhile, more Blackmoon Guards converged in the area. All of them had the same reaction, as if lightning were crashing around inside their minds.

The dozens of nearby Blackmoon Guards, and the hundreds that were gathered further off, all stared wordlessly in shock.

When the Chosen in the East Ascension Pavilion saw what was happening, their eyes gleamed with a strange light. Fang Wei suddenly seemed to remember something, and his face turned extremely unsightly. Fang Yunyi gaped, unsure of how to react to this sudden development.

He couldn't understand what the Blackmoon Guards had seen that would suddenly cause them to stop in place and not dare to get any closer.

Fang Hong stared in shock. Fang Xiangshan hesitated. Fang Donghan's eyes shone with curiosity.

"What the hell are you still doing here?" said Meng Hao icily, still not deigning to look behind him.

The instant the words left his mouth, the Blackmoon Guards behind him gasped. They suddenly clasped hands and bowed to Meng Hao, then bitterly turned and made their way off.

Many among the audience around Brightmoon Lake saw this, and gaped in shock. They had just personally witnessed the Blackmoon Guards, brimming with killing intent, suddenly stop in place and then retreat en masse, clearly not daring to get even an inch closer.

There were a few people in the crowd who had exceptional eyesight, and managed to catch a glimpse of the object Meng Hao held in his hand. They gasped, and expressions of blank disbelief appeared on their faces.

"The command medallion of a tier 8 alchemist!!"

"That's the same as a clan Elder's command medallion.... A tier 8 alchemist's command medallion!! That gives him the same status as a clan Elder! And clan Elders... are qualified to order the Blackmoon Guards to stand down!"

"Fang Hao concocted a Skypalace Sunspirit Pill, which means that he instantly became a tier 8 alchemist!!"

The sounds of the tumult outside drifted into the pavilion, causing the

cultivators gathered there to inhale sharply.

Fang Xi gaped, and then suddenly went wild with joy.

Meng Hao slowly lowered his hand, looking at Fang Wei with a slight smile.

“Would you say I’m qualified now?”

Fang Wei’s expression was extremely unsightly as he stared at Meng Hao. Before he could even respond, Meng Hao stepped forward and raised his right hand. Fang Yunyi’s face fell, and he tried to escape, but his body involuntarily flew through the air toward Meng Hao, who grabbed him by the neck.

“You see me, and don’t greet me properly,” Meng Hao said, smiling, gently patting Fang Yunyi’s cheek. “Ah, Yunyi, it seems that the last time I taught you a lesson, you just didn’t get it.”

Meng Hao’s smile caused Fang Yunyi to begin to tremble. He was about to say something, when suddenly Meng Hao’s face darkened and he slammed Fang Yunyi onto the floor of the pavilion.

The pavilion was magically reinforced, and couldn’t be damaged by such an action. It was incredibly tough, which resulted in Fang Yunyi letting out a bloodcurdling scream. Next, Meng Hao slammed him into the ground seven or eight more times.

Blood sprayed from Fang Yunyi’s mouth, and he screamed over and over again. He even begged for mercy. Fang Wei frowned.

“That’s enough!” he said.

Meng Hao smiled and looked over at Fang Wei.

“Under my authority as an Elder, I’m reprimanding a clan member. Junior Cousin Fang Wei, on what authority did you speak those two words to me just now?”

With that, Meng Hao grabbed Fang Yunyi by the hair, swung him around and then chucked him off to the side. Blood spattered everywhere. The Chosen in the room watched and said nothing. However, as they observed

at Meng Hao's actions, each of them were thinking different things.

That was especially true of Sun Hai, who was shivering slightly.

Fang Wei's expression was extremely grim as he looked at Meng Hao. He was about to say something, when Meng Hao laughed.

"On the other hand," he said, "the moon is out tonight, and the stars are bright. Tomorrow is the rise of the East Ascension Sun, an auspicious day. Besides, I see a lot of old friends here, which makes me happy. I won't make things any harder for you." He looked out at all the Chosen, each of whom had different expressions on their faces.

Sun Hai subconsciously bowed his head. Li Ling'er stared in rage. Fan Dong'er's face flickered with killing intent, and Wang Mu looked like he wanted to fight then and there. Song Luodan and Taiyang Zi were both staring at him with clenched jaws.

Their past experiences with Meng Hao were things that they would never be able to forget.

Meng Hao looked slightly embarrassed, then chuckled bashfully as he looked down at the terrified Fang Yunyi, who lay there bedraggled and broken-boned.

"Write me a promissory note," Meng Hao said, narrowing his eyes and smiling. He immediately produced pen and paper from his bag of holding, which he held out in front of Fang Yunyi. "You know me, and you know what to write."

With that, he patted Fang Yunyi on the head.

Fang Yunyi's face was pale white. To him, Meng Hao was the most evil fiend imaginable in Heaven and Earth. Trembling, he used his own blood to write out a promissory note.

Meng Hao accepted the promissory note, blew on it a bit to dry it, and gingerly placed it in his bag of holding as if it were a treasure. Then, he smiled at Fang Yunyi and said something that caused Fang Yunyi's blood to run cold.

“Yunyi, you’ll get no third chance. If you act like this again the next time you see me... I’ll make sure you live a life worse than death.” Meng Hao’s smile stretched from ear to ear, but his words were as cold as ice. It was a stark contrast that caused all of the Chosen in the pavilion to look on in reticent silence.

Fang Yunyi started to pant and tremble, and his expression turned into one of extreme terror. He could sense the murderous intent in Meng Hao’s words, and was also certain that when Meng Hao said he would do something... he would never fail to follow through on his promise.

Fang Yunyi knew that if he did not respectfully greet Meng Hao the next time he saw him, Meng Hao would definitely... leave him wishing he were dead.

He was frightened, well and truly frightened. Even Fang Wei was incapable of helping him in this situation, causing his fear to reach heights that it could not be described even with the word ‘terror.’

“Now, screw off to whatever hole you crawled out of,” said Meng Hao. He grabbed Fang Yunyi by the hair and violently tossed him out of the pavilion. Intense pain wracked Fang Yunyi’s body as he flew out over Brightmoon Lake and landed in the middle of the crowd outside.

After being helped to his feet, he left immediately, trying to put as much distance between himself and Meng Hao as possible. The entire time, his heart was gripped with icy terror.

Back in the East Ascension Pavilion, Meng Hao looked around at the various Chosen, and a bashful smile appeared on his face, as if he were slightly embarrassed to have suddenly run into so many old friends.

“Greetings, Fellow Daoists!” he said. “We meet again! I’ve missed all of you!”

Looking quite at ease, he walked up to Sun Hai and, before he could back away, slid his arm around his neck, as if they were good friends.

“Hey, if it isn’t L’il Hai! How are you?! Have things been well? Why did you shave your head? Not bad, I think it’s quite a unique hairstyle.”

Sun Hai started to tremble, and he looked as if he might start crying at any moment. Meng Hao's shadow lurked perpetually in his heart, a point that could be seen clearly from his cleanly-shaven head.

Meng Hao rubbed Sun Hai's shiny head and patted it a few times. Sun Hai choked with silent fury, feeling frustrated to the extreme. At this point, Meng Hao's gaze came to rest on Li Ling'er. Subconsciously, he couldn't refrain from... looking at Li Ling'er's curvaceous rear end.

"Aiya! Little sis Ling'er, I haven't seen you for so long! You're even prettier than before. Your rear end... looks really nice...." He cleared his throat. "Hey, don't look at me that way! You know, now that I think about it, we were actually engaged as children!"

Li Ling'er's expression was extremely dark as she stared at Meng Hao. Her chest rose and fell as she panted, and she looked like she was on the verge of exploding. Were it not for the fact that she knew she wasn't a match for Meng Hao, and that they were also in the Fang Clan, then she would definitely go all out to fight him.

Seeing that Li Ling'er was on the verge of bursting, Meng Hao quickly looked away, turning his attention to Fan Dong'er. Instantly, his eyes brightened.

"Eee? Inky! You're here too! Little sis Dong'er, I've already loaned you Inky for quite a while now, when will you be giving her back to me?"

Fan Dong'er's eyes blazed with rage, and she raised her right hand. Cracking sounds could be heard as two violet flying daggers suddenly appeared. Mysterious flames hissed up from the daggers, and they emanated terrifying auras.

"I dare you to say one more word!" she said through gritted teeth.

# Chapter 931: Her Name is Fang Yu!

Her words overflowed with killing intent, as if a single inappropriate word would lead to a fight.

Meng Hao blinked and then coughed lightly. Keeping his arm wrapped around Sun Hai, he looked around at some of the others.

“Well, if it isn’t Song Luodan! And Taiyang Zi! Wang Mu, you’re here too! Wonderful! You’re all here. Well then... when are you going to be paying back the money you owe?”

Meng Hao’s handful of sentences instantly provoked a reaction from the various Chosen in the East Ascension Pavilion. Some burst out angrily, others glared at him furiously, and some had bloodshot eyes.

“Shut the hell up!”

“Shut your trap!”

“Meng Hao, you’re pushing people too far!!”

“Meng Hao, if you dare to insult me one more time, we’re going to have a blood feud the likes of which has never been seen before!!”

When Fang Xi saw all of this happening, he stared at Meng Hao in blank shock. Then he looked at the enraged Chosen, and took a deep breath. He had no idea what Meng Hao had done to provoke such widespread indignation, to cause these Chosen to be so wrathful.

Fang Xi was even more thunderstruck by the words exchanged between Meng Hao and Li Ling’er, as well as Fan Dong’er. Actually, Fan Dong’er was the celestial goddess of Fang Xi’s dreams....

And yet, in the blink of an eye, that celestial goddess had summoned deadly weapons. Any rapturous illusions Fang Xi had about her were instantly dispelled by her vicious wrath.

Fang Xi wasn’t the only shocked one. Fang Hong also stared with wide eyes. She couldn’t imagine what disputes Meng Hao had with these people to make them act in this way. Apparently, Meng Hao’s brief words had

stabbed deep into their hearts.

Even Fang Wei was at a loss as to how Meng Hao could be so familiar with these people....

Only Fang Xiangshan and Fang Donghan truly knew of the inspiring and tragic connection between all of them, and how world-shaking those events had been.

The surrounding Fang Clan members stared in shock at Meng Hao and the Chosen, their minds reeling.

Meng Hao's appearance in the pavilion made him the complete center of attention. Even Fang Wei was somehow surpassed.

The Chosen's response to his words caused Meng Hao's face to suddenly darken.

Before he could even say anything though, the parrot, which had maintained silence up to this point, rolled its eyes and then glared at all the people.

"He who owes shall repay!" it squawked. "This is a principle of Heaven and Earth! You shameless bunch had better repay what you owe immediately!"

"If you have no money, then find some furred or feathered beasts for Lord Fifth! If Lord Fifth is satisfied, then he'll help you pay back the debt! What do you say?"

Meng Hao snorted coldly and glared at the crowd. Then he slapped his bag of holding and produced a stack of promissory notes. He began tapping his finger on the notes, and then looked up.

"White paper and words written in blood. The handwriting is very clear, yes? Do you people really dare to renege on your debts?" Meng Hao was clearly incensed. He was well aware that concocting the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill had temporarily resolved his spirit stone quandary. However, according to his calculations, what he had earned still wouldn't be enough. Now, his joy at finding so many people who owed him money was turning into fury.

In the instant that Meng Hao pulled out the stack of promissory notes, Fang Xi gasped. Fang Hong's eyes went wide, and even Fang Wei stared in shock.

All of the surrounding members of the Fang Clan stared blankly in disbelief at Meng Hao standing there, tapping his finger on the promissory notes. This image of Meng Hao was now deeply ingrained in their hearts.

"How... how many promissory notes does he actually have?"

"Didn't Fang Hao come from Planet South Heaven? How could there be so many people who borrowed money from him?"

"What exactly does this guy do? Is he a cultivator? How come he just doesn't seem like a cultivator to me?"

The Fang Clan's Chosen gaped as their minds filled with buzzing thoughts.

"Sun Hai," said Meng Hao, sounding very displeased. "Why don't you start first." He patted Sun Hai's head. "Don't think that because you're bald now that I can't grab ahold of you. There's always going to be some place on your body that has hair, right?"

Upon hearing these words, the parrot's eyes suddenly shone brightly, and it stared at Sun Hai with interest.

Sun Hai began to quiver. He gritted his teeth and was about to protest, when Meng Hao's words suddenly reminded him of his nightmarish experience on Planet South Heaven. Finally, he scowled.

"Uh...can I pay back a little less than I owe?"

Meng Hao was instantly pleased.

"Alright!" he said, eyes shining. "Let's start with the interest, how about that?" Sun Hai grimaced, clenched his teeth, and then slapped his bag of holding, producing some spirit stones that he handed over to Meng Hao.

Meng Hao quickly collected them up, licked his lips, and then eyed Sun Hai's bag of holding.

"Considering how rarely we run into each other, why don't you repay a

bit more than that?"

"I really can't," said Sun Hai. "I... I actually came to the Fang Clan to buy something particular.... It's... well, I know this girl from the Fang Clan, and I really want to buy her a gift. Hey, you never know, we might end up being family!"

"Oh, so that's how it is," said Meng Hao. "Why don't you repay a bit more of your debt, and I'll put in a good word for you." He smiled and patted Sun Hai's head.

He suddenly realized that patting Sun Hai's head actually felt very good, so he patted it a few more times for good measure.

"Li'l Hai, don't worry. Pay back those spirit stones, and I'll help you out. In the Fang Clan, the highest Elders and the lowliest branch members all have to give me face."

Sun Hai hesitated for a moment. He knew that Meng Hao was the eldest grandson of the direct bloodline. Even though the direct bloodline was in decline, Meng Hao's father was still alive, and Meng Hao had certainly been throwing his weight around the clan recently.

Based on his earlier inquiries, none of the other Chosen in the clan were familiar with the girl he liked, which was making Sun Hai anxious. Now that he saw how domineering Meng Hao was, he figured... he might as well give Meng Hao's suggestion a shot.

"I wonder if he'll really put in a good word for me...." Sun Hai thought, gritting his teeth. He was thoroughly entranced with this Fang Clan girl, to the point where he wasn't even acting rationally. Finally, he slapped his bag of holding and passed an even larger sum of spirit stones over to Meng Hao.

When Meng Hao saw them, his eyes shone with brilliant light.

"Li'l Hai, don't you worry. You leave everything to your Big Bro." Meng Hao put the spirit stones away, and before Sun Hai could say anything more, began to walk over to Li Ling'er.

She stared at him, furious, her expression icy.

He hesitated for a moment, then glanced down at her rear end. Sighing, he thought about his actions as Fang Mu, and realized that there was an eighty percent certainty that Li Ling'er had recognized him. Therefore, he couldn't push her too far.

He turned to look at Fan Dong'er, but when he saw the deadly-looking violet flying daggers swirling around above her hand, his expression turned somber, and he turned to walk toward Taiyang Zi and the others.

"Taiyang Zi, Song Luodan, Wang Mu!" he barked. "All of you owe me money. It's time to PAY UP!"

Taiyang Zi and the other two glared back at Meng Hao, flames of rage flickering in their eyes.

They all stared at each other for a few breaths of time, after which Meng Hao took a step forward toward them. At this exact moment, Taiyang Zi and the others attacked simultaneously. Booms echoed out as all four of them flew out of the pavilion and began to fight.

Rumbling filled the air as Meng Hao transformed into a golden roc that slashed its talons toward Taiyang Zi. At the same time, a chain of mountains rumbled out next to him, crushing down toward Song Luodan. A moment later, he flapped a wing, causing the air to shred as power shot toward Wang Mu.

Booms echoed out in all directions. Even though it was late at night, and very dark, the light of magic filled the air, and all of the Fang Clan members down below stared up to watch. When they saw Meng Hao single-handedly battling three amazing Chosen, their minds trembled.

"That's Song Luodan from the Song Clan. And Taiyang Zi from the Five Great Holy Lands! The last one is the Wang Clan Chosen, Wang Mu!"

"All three of them are in the process of rising to be true Immortals! Once they do, they'll definitely be even more famous than they are now!"

"I can't believe Fang Hao is fighting all three of them at the same time!!"

Booms echoed out as the four of them fought back and forth constantly. Meng Hao clenched his fist and then punched out, unleashing the Nine

Heavens Destruction. Blood sprayed from Song Luodan's mouth. As for Wang Mu and Taiyang Zi, one of them called wind and summoned rain, while the other transformed into blinding sunlight. Even as they closed in on Meng Hao, he snorted coldly. A Blood Demon head appeared, which head butted Wang Mu. Simultaneously, the Ninth Mountain materialized, slamming toward Taiyang Zi.

"You guys are a lot stronger than the first time we fought," said Meng Hao. "Unfortunately for you... I could put you in your place last time, and I can do the same thing today!" His cultivation base surged with power, and he extended his hand. Rumbling filled the sky as numerous mountains descended, cutting off all avenues of escape for Taiyang Zi and the others.

Roaring, the three of them materialized their Dharma Idols. Meng Hao responded in kind. The Dharma Idols belonging to Taiyang Zi and the others all bore visible traces of Immortality Illumination Vines.

As they fought, Taiyang Zi and the others were continuously forced to retreat. Finally, a boom could be heard, and blood sprayed from their mouths as they tumbled backward. Meng Hao's eyes glittered, and he prepared to rush forward in pursuit.

However, it was at this point that an archaic voice rumbled out from the ancestral mansion.

"Magical battle is prohibited during the rise of the East Ascension Sun. If anyone makes another attack... their right to bathe in the sunlight will be revoked!"

As the voice echoed out, two ancient figures noiselessly appeared in midair around the East Ascension Pavilion. Massive pressure radiated out, separating Meng Hao from Taiyang Zi and the others.

These two old men were Elders of the Fang Clan. They looked over at Meng Hao, frowned, then looked at Taiyang Zi and the others.

"All of you get back into the pavilion. Sunrise is almost upon us."

Taiyang Zi and the others took deep breaths. Then they clasped hands and bowed to the two old men. Glaring angrily at Meng Hao, they flew

back into the pavilion.

Meng Hao glared back at them, then headed back to the pavilion himself.

“Still won’t pay me back?” he said with a cold smile. “From now on, any time I run into you, I’ll definitely put you in your place!” After setting foot back into the pavilion, he looked around until he saw Fang Xi and Sun Hai, after which he walked over to Sun Hai.

As time passed, most everyone in the pavilion sat there cross-legged. Fang Wei remained quite subdued; after Meng Hao returned to the pavilion, he remained mostly silent. His expression did not reveal anything either, as if the previous clash between the two of them didn’t matter to him at all. In fact, when Meng Hao had fought with Taiyang Zi and the others, he had taken one glance and then looked away as if he didn’t care.

Soon, everything quieted down. Daybreak was nearing. Eventually, it reached that darkest of pre-dawn moments in which everyone knew that the East Ascension Sun... was about to rise!

Meng Hao’s eyes shone with a strange light, and he took a deep breath. It was at this point that Sun Hai hesitated for a moment, then quietly began to speak.

“Meng Hao... um... about that thing you promised earlier....”

“Don’t worry, I’ll take care of it,” said Meng Hao, yawning. “Oh, right, how far along are you in your relationship with this girl?”

Sun Hai’s face reddened, and he lowered his voice even more.

“I’m not really sure,” he said. “She always beats me up....”

When Meng Hao heard this, he suddenly perked up.

“Well, that won’t do!” he said. “What’s her name? Is she here in the pavilion? Of all the nerve! How could she dare to beat people up?!”

“Oh, it doesn’t matter,” Sun Hai hurried to respond. “Every time she hurts me, I actually feel very happy.... She’s not here now, though. She’s a disciple of the Church of the Emperor Immortal. Her name is Fang Yu.”

# Chapter 932: The Sun Rises!

It was now the moment before daybreak. Everything was pitch black, and all eyes were fixed on the east!

It wasn't just the group inside the East Ascension Pavilion who were staring eastward. All of the Fang Clan members on the shores of Brightmoon Lake, throughout the rest of the ancestral mansion, and even on all of Planet East Victory, were now waiting.

However, back in the East Ascension Pavilion, Meng Hao heard the name 'Fang Yu,' and his expression instantly changed. His eyes went wide, and he turned to look at Sun Hai.

Sun Hai looked a bit embarrassed. Whenever he said Fang Yu's name, he felt happy, and an expression of longing would appear on his face.

"Did you just say that the girl you like is named Fang Yu?" asked Meng Hao. He was starting to pant, and he suddenly had a very bad feeling.

"Yeah, that's right," Sun Hai replied, nodding his head. "Her name is Fang Yu. She's a member of the Fang Clan, but also a disciple of the Church of the Emperor Immortal." The happiness he felt grew stronger, and as of yet, he hadn't noticed the change in Meng Hao's facial expression.

"Elder Brother Meng, it's all up to you now," he continued. "However many more spirit stones you need, as long as I can get my hands on them, I'll give them to you. Elder Brother Meng, please, please put in a good word or two for me...."

Meng Hao's expression changed again. Now he was staring blankly.

Unwilling to accept the truth, he asked another question.

"That Fang in her name, is it the same Fang as from my Fang Clan? And the Yu, is it the same character that means 'beautiful jade'?"

"Yeah, that's right!" said Sun Hai, looking somewhat intoxicated. "She's none other than Fang Yu, as beautiful as a piece of fine jade."

Meng Hao's heart started to pound. "Did she join the Church of the Emperor Immortal less than two years ago?" he asked, still hardly capable of believing what he was hearing.

"Eee? How did you know? That's right! She just joined the Church of the Emperor Immortal a little less than two years ago! However, Junior Sister Fang's latent talent is shocking. It's impossible to say clearly what her future prospects are." Sun Hai sighed.

"You...." Blue veins had popped out on Meng Hao's forehead, and he was staring wrathfully at Sun Hai.

Sun Hai gaped as he finally noticed Meng Hao's strange expression.

Surprised, he quickly said, "Elder Brother Meng, don't worry. Sun Hai will never forget this kindness. If Fang Yu and I ever get married, I'll definitely invite you to the wedding banquet...."

Meng Hao's mind filled with roaring as he thought about the explosive temper of his older sister Fang Yu. If she knew about what he had promised to do for Sun Hai, it would be impossible to say how many times she would beat him up the next time she saw him.... All of a sudden, he felt like the biggest idiot in the entire world. He had actually... sold his older sister off....

Sun Hai then continued, getting more and more excited as he spoke.

"If we have a son, you can even be his godfather!

"As a husband and wife, we will never forget your kindness for the rest of our lives.... It's all riding on you, Elder Brother Meng....

"Oh, Elder Brother Meng, could you help me ask around and find out which bloodline Fang Yu is from? I'm planning to go make a formal visit soon...."

"Shut your mouth this instant!" roared Meng Hao. He truly felt stupid for not having thought of this possibility. His sudden outburst caused numerous faces in the pavilion to turn and look his way. Sun Hai gaped, uncertain of why Meng Hao would suddenly be so angry.

Meng Hao reached out, grabbed Sun Hai, and pulled him close. Jaw clenched, he stared Sun Hai in the eye, certain that Sun Hai had done all of this on purpose, had dug a pit for him, and then pushed him in headfirst.

Yes! It was definitely on purpose!

"Do you have a younger sister?" Meng Hao asked through clenched teeth.

Sun Hai was momentarily struck dumb. From the feeling he got at this moment, Meng Hao seemed to be on the verge of flying into a rage.

"Uh... yeah, yeah I have a younger sister, she—"

"Who's more of a bitch, you or your sister!" Meng Hao interrupted loudly. "You joker! I can't believe you have the gall to con ME!!" His eyes were bloodshot, and his heart pulsed with rage. All his life, he had been the one to con others, and had never imagined that somehow, Sun Hai would manage to pull a con on him.

That was especially true when he remembered that he had promised to act as a go-between. Meng Hao couldn't help but sigh inwardly. There was no way that he would dare to have anything to do with his sister's love life. Any time he thought of her violent temper, he would feel his head starting to ache.

"I didn't con you!" said Sun Hai, looking confused. "I really do have a younger sister. Her name is Sun Chan." Meng Hao's flare of temper was really strange to him. Moments ago, everything had been going smoothly, then he flew into a rage in the blink of an eye. All of a sudden, Sun Hai had the feeling that Meng Hao and Fang Yu were very similar in some ways.

Meng Hao burned with anger and was just about to say something else when light appeared in the darkness outside.

The light swept out instantly, shredding the darkness into pieces. Sunlight expanded in all directions, a mighty power that instantly suppressed all the dark of night.

In that instant in which darkness and light intersected, where white and

black clashed, all eyes in the world seemed to be locked... on the east, which was the source of all the beams of light.

"It's here! The East Ascension Sun!"

"The East Ascension Sun rises every 100 years. The one hundred year cycle reaches its culmination now! This is when the Sun is at its closest point to Planet East Victory!"

"If you bathe in the light of the East Ascension Sun, your fleshly body can reach a point of incredible power!"

Even as the buzz of conversation spread out, the entire world of Planet East Victory suddenly became filled with indescribable, broiling heat. It was almost as if the whole planet had been wrapped in fire!

Black smoke rose from the ground, and steam ascended from bodies of water. The land seemed to ripple, as if the heat was affecting the entire planet.

The East Ascension Sun... was rising!!

Even Meng Hao forgot about his plans to cause trouble for Sun Hai, and looked up.

The sight immediately sent his mind spinning, because... the sun was clearly rising up from the east, and, according to how things would normally go, it should rise up slowly. However, in the instant that Meng Hao glanced over, what he saw... was the noon sun!

It was as if the process of the sun rising up from the horizon into the middle of the sky took only the space of a few breaths.

Actually, this was not the movement of the East Ascension Sun, but rather, the movement of Planet East Victory. In that instant, some unfathomable method caused the entire planet to rotate, adjusting its angle so that the Fang Clan ancestral mansion was fixed at the point closest to the sun!

It was now moving along with the sun, which meant... that with the East Ascension Sun in the sky, instead of a normal 24-hour day, the daylight

would last for 36 days!

36 days later the Sun would continue to move off into the distance, and would no longer be closest to Planet East Victory, whereupon the planet would return to its normal state of affairs.

That would mark the end of the rise of the East Ascension Sun. As for the people on the other three great planets in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, they might receive some benefit, but because they were further away, they would not gain nearly as much as those on Planet East Victory!

Sunrise lasted for only a moment and then, for 36 days, it would be high noon!

The entire scene was even clearer when viewed from out in space. Planet East Victory hung there, shimmering, smoke rising up from it, almost as if it were on the verge of melting!

The power that put Planet East Victory on the verge of melting... came from a bright, shining field of light that lit up the entire starry sky!

The light shone from the east, sweeping through the starry sky, its power dissolving anything that it touched.

Countless meteors and debris vanished without a trace, almost as if they had evaporated.

If there were some almighty figure who stood inside of that light, they would be able to see that, to the east of Planet East Victory, within the previously pitch-black void of space, there was now... suddenly... a matchlessly enormous heavenly body!

This heavenly body was crimson, as if it were formed from lava, and it emanated intense heat and light. This was... the sun!!

This was one of the two heavenly bodies that existed outside of the Nine Mountains and Seas. The sun!

Outside of the Nine Mountains and Seas was an enormous sun and a gigantic moon, which maintained fixed orbits around all of the mountains and seas. Around and around, they had spun for countless years without

crossing paths, and apparently, would continue to do so for an eternity.

Because of the position of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, it and the First Mountain and Sea were the places in which one could now bathe in the light of the sun and the moon. As for Planet East Victory, it was the closest one could get to the sun in all the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

As of this moment, there were few cultivators who could survive out in the space between the sun and Planet East Victory. The only people who could... were Dao Realm experts of the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

There were other almighty figures who had long been waiting for this moment to be able to bathe in the light of the sun, and thus acquire good fortune.

Almost in the exact moment that the sun rose, numerous cultivators on Planet East Victory flew up into the sky, to feel the light of the sun, to be bathed and baptized in its light.

Such people were not qualified to go to the Fang Clan to bathe in the light of the sun, and could only experience a scaled-down version of it in various other regions.

Of course, in the Fang Clan's ancestral mansion, the East Ascension Pavilion atop Brightmoon Lake was the absolute closest location to the East Ascension Sun. Currently, that was the most desirable place to be on the entire planet.

Other than stepping out into the starry sky itself, there was no better place to bathe in the light of the sun than the East Ascension Pavilion. Of course, no one under the Dao Realm could possibly step out into the starry sky to face the sun without dying.

As such, it is easy to imagine how precious of an opportunity it was to be present in the East Ascension Pavilion.

At the same time, the Fang Clan Elders mobilized 30,000 powerful experts, who sat down cross-legged, outlining the shape of a massive spell formation. When the spell formation was activated, a huge pillar of light shot up!

The pillar of light surrounded Brightmoon Lake, stretching out to a width of 9,000 meters and then shooting from the ground all the way up into the Heavens, seemingly linking them to Planet East Victory. This beam of light made it impossible for any outsider to enter that area, and made the power of the East Ascension Sun, which had already been much stronger here than in any other area, exponentially stronger than it had been before!

Within the 9,000-meter beam of light, ninety percent or more of the people were members of the Fang Clan. Any others were Chosen who had recently come to Planet East Victory.

You could say that even if someone merely sat down cross-legged within the light, and didn't even rise up into the sky, they would still experience incredible progress with their fleshly body. The main question was how long someone could remain in the light. If someone pushed beyond their limit, their entire body would be burned to ash.

Of course, the truly powerful experts would not be content to just sit cross-legged on the ground. They would choose to fly up into the air. The higher one flew, the closer one got to the East Ascension Sun. If one were able to reach the boundary between the planet and outer space, that person would experience unimaginable gains.

Unfortunately, throughout all the years, no one under the Dao Realm had reached such a point.

Furthermore, it was impossible to tell exactly where that point lay!

Some people said it was at 150,000 meters. Their line of reasoning was that 150,000 meters was where the sky was no longer blue, but rather, a deep violet color. Other people said that the point lay at 300,000 meters, because in that location, the sky was black, and there was little difference between that area and the starry sky itself. From there, one could look down and see the entire planet beneath one's feet.

There were some people who said the point lay at 600,000 meters, and others even said 900,000 meters. There were many opinions. However, no one could make any definite judgements. After all, the size of the planet

itself actually had a lot to do with the matter.

Therefore, the exact height of the Heavens of Planet East Victory was difficult to judge.

According to the Fang Clan, the point of demarcation between the planet and the starry sky was set at 300,000 meters!

Right now, nobody under the Dao Realm could possibly fly to that end point of 300,000 meters!

# Chapter 933: Struggling for Supremacy!

Of course, people in the Dao Realm didn't need to passively bathe in the light of heavenly bodies. They could fly off the planet itself and directly face the light of the sun!

Right now, within the 9,000-meter area around Brightmoon Lake, everyone sat cross-legged, bathing in the light of East Ascension Sun. Suddenly, Fang Wei flew out from the East Ascension Pavilion, and proceeded to shoot up into the sky without the slightest pause.

The boundless sunlight was shockingly hot. The entire world seemed visibly distorted, as if all of the moisture in the air had been completely sucked away. All of Brightmoon Lake seemed to have evaporated into a mist, and was now completely dried up.

Cracks appeared on the surface of the ground as the Fang Clan members around Brightmoon Lake soaked in the power of the sunlight and used it to strengthen their fleshly bodies to shocking levels.

When Fang Wei flew out, it attracted a lot of attention. He was a Chosen, a blazing sun of the Fang Clan. He instantly shot up to a height of 3,000 meters with incredible speed. It was there that he took a deep breath and then settled down cross-legged, seemingly transforming into a black hole that rapidly sucked in sunlight.

A commotion immediately broke out.

"Prince Wei is really deserving of his reputation!"

"He's not just absorbing the sunlight, he's gobbling it up! What profound understanding of the East Ascension Sun!"

Even the experts and Elders in the ancestral mansion were silently nodding their heads.

The second person to fly up into the sky was Wang Mu, Chosen of the Wang Clan. His eyes flickered with a strange gleam as he flew up into the air, his expression quickly turning into one of excitement.

"The Patriarch had a magic called Sundered Night, which was created

after he gained enlightenment of the rising sun.... Today, I, Wang Mu, will contemplate the East Ascension Sun, which will improve my own enlightenment of Sundered Night!" 1

After Wang Mu, it was Taiyang Zi, who rose up into the air laughing. He was from one of the Five Holy Lands, Mount Sun, and he cultivated a magical technique that had a lot to do with the sun. Therefore, the good fortune of this day meant more to him than anyone else.

Taiyang Zi immediately flew to a position roughly 2,400 meters high. He took a deep breath, and then... completely transformed into something that looked like a sun! Everyone who could see him was instantly shocked.

Next were Fan Dong'er and Li Ling'er. The two young women flew up, one to a height of 3,000 meters, the other to a height of 2,700 meters, where they both settled cross-legged. Both of them were beautiful to begin with, but underneath the light of the sun, they were scintillating, and emanated a feeling of holiness. Anyone who saw them would feel their hearts pounding, as if they were looking at celestial beings.

Song Luodan followed closely behind. After him were the other Fang Clan Chosen, among whom Fang Donghan was the swiftest. He came to a stop at a position roughly 1,800 meters high, astonishing many clan members.

Meng Hao released Sun Hai, whose expression was somber as he stepped forward and then flew up to a height of 2,100 meters. He emanated the energy of an Emperor, causing vast quantities of sunlight to build up around him.

Of all the Chosen who flew out from East Ascension Pavilion, none stopped at a position lower than 1,200 meters. Even Fang Xi managed to make it to 1,200 meters, where he began to meditate. There were quite a few other clan members in that same position, most of whom flew up from positions surrounding Brightmoon Lake.

Meng Hao didn't fly up. He remained sitting cross-legged in the pavilion. The heat from the outside penetrated into his body, making him feel as if he had caught fire.

It caused beads of sweat to begin to roll down his face, all of which were pitch black. It was as if there were impurities within his body that were now being forced out. At the same time, he began to absorb some of the heat, strengthening his qi passageways, toughening his bones, and increasing the power of his blood and flesh.

“East Ascension Sun!” he thought, taking in a deep breath. The heat battered his face, pouring into his body, which began to tremble. After some time past, he finally flew out of the pavilion.

The instant he appeared outside, he could hear the clamor of voices. People weren’t talking about him, though, they were focused on... Fang Wei!

“21,000 meters! I can’t believe Prince Wei reached 21,000 meters!”

“It’s only been an hour, and he’s already at 21,000 meters! the heat there could vaporize an ordinary Spirit Realm cultivator in the space of a single breath!”

“Prince Wei really deserves his reputation!”

Meng Hao heard the cries of surprise ringing out. Earlier, he had spent one hour inside of the pavilion to get used to the sunlight of the East Ascension Sun. Now, as he looked up into the sky, he could see the various Chosen up in their various positions high in the sky.

The highest, of course... was Fang Wei!

He wore white garments, and floated alone at a height of 21,000 meters, grand and magnificent. Golden light surrounded him as sunlight poured into his body.

Fang Wei’s hair floated around him, making his normally handsome appearance even more shockingly elegant and graceful. Anyone who caught sight of him would be unable to withhold a cry of praise.

The three people just below Fang Wei were Taiyang Zi, Fan Dong’er and... someone Meng Hao wasn’t familiar with. When he had been with the other Chosen earlier, laughing and chatting, Meng Hao had learned that this was the Chosen from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto... Zhou Xin!

Seeing Zhou Xin reminded Meng Hao of someone else from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto....

"I wonder how Zhao Yifan is doing...." he thought.

When Meng Hao had first gotten to know all of these Chosen, Taiyang Zi's cultivation base did not allow him to stand on a level similar to Fan Dong'er. However, the magic he cultivated gave him an advantage due to being connected to the sun, and therefore, he was at the same level as the other two, 19,500 meters. Below them at the 18,000-meter mark were Li Ling'er and Wang Mu!

Song Luodan, Sun Hai and the others were all at the 15,000-meter level. Fang Donghan was among their number, and many were paying attention to him. The main reason for that was that he normally kept a very low profile in the Fang Clan, and yet on this occasion, unexpectedly made it 15,000 meters high.

Meanwhile, back in the Fang Clan ancestral mansion, many of the Elders and other powerful experts were watching events play out. The Grand Elder was one of them, and as he looked at Fang Wei's lofty position, his face was devoid of any expression. No one who looked at him would possibly be able to guess what he was thinking.

Fang Wei's father and grandfather sat some distance away from the Grand Elder. Both of them were smiling.

"Wei'er has been preparing for years, building up resources, all with the goal of reaching a height of 300,000 meters...."

"If anyone can do it, it's Wei'er!"

Outside of the East Ascension Pavilion, Meng Hao watched as everyone, including Fang Wei and the other Chosen, slowly climbed higher and higher. As they did, the good fortune they acquired increased.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered.

"I haven't kept a low profile at all in the Fang Clan, and today will be no different!"

“Moreover, this sunlight will greatly benefit my fleshly body. In fact, it’s possible that... I can take my fleshly body... to the level of true Immortality!”

Meng Hao took a deep breath and then began to rise into the air. In one simple movement, he reached 3,000 meters. He stopped there for a moment to take a breath. The sunlight distorted as it engulfed him, and was then sucked into his mouth.

Because of the massive amounts of sunlight that Meng Hao was absorbing, a rumbling sound suddenly echoed out!

It was a sound created from light containing natural law being accelerated to a high speed in the process of being absorbed. It was a strange sound that first sounded like rumbling, but then, if one listened closer, sounded like an enraged roar.

As the sound spread out, it immediately attracted quite a bit of attention.

“That’s Fang Hao!”

“What was that sound just now?”

“It’s coming from around Fang Hao! The rays of light are distorted. He’s gulping them up just like Prince Wei did!”

Meng Hao ignored the buzz of conversation. His body felt like it was about to burst into flames. He trembled for a moment, then closed his eyes, relishing the feeling of becoming like an incarnation of flame. His fleshly body was on fire, and because of it, was in the midst of transforming!

“Wonderful,” he thought, opening his eyes. Flames danced within his pupils. He threw his head back and laughed, then proceeded on higher. He was now at the 6,000-meter position!

As soon as he arrived, the other clan members at the 6,000-meter position looked over at him. Fang Xi was there, and when he saw Meng Hao, he started to get excited.

Meng Hao took a second deep breath, sucking in more sunlight. The

intense temperatures around him turned into a whirlpool, and he was completely inundated by sunlight.

Yet again, that strange noise emanated out!

Next, Meng Hao laughed and then proceeded on a third time, then a fourth, then a fifth!

9,000 meters. 12,000 meters. 15,000 meters!

The shocking sound echoed out yet again, three times!

RUUUMMMMBLLLE!

Everything in the area shook, and the clan members sitting cross-legged on the ground, bathing in the sunlight, began to look up, startled by the sound. When they saw what was happening, their expressions flickered with shock and astonishment.

They weren't the only surprised ones. All of the people at the 15,000-meter position were shaken as they personally watched Meng Hao approaching at top speed. Every time he moved, he rose 3,000 meters, and creating massive rumbling sounds!

"Five steps to get 15,000 meters! Fang Hao... isn't just astonishingly skilled in the Dao of alchemy, his fleshly body is incredibly powerful!"

"It takes a strong cultivation base to bathe in the sunlight, but even more important is a strong fleshly body to support you! Without that, if you climb too high, you'll be instantly killed!"

In the ancestral mansion, a strange gleam could be seen in the Grand Elder's eyes as he watched Meng Hao. Fang Wei's father and grandfather were frowning. As for all the direct bloodline clan members, they were starting to get excited. Fang Xi's father, 19th Uncle, was laughing happily.

Meng Hao took a deep breath as he hovered there at the 15,000-meter position. He took a moment to experience the shocking temperature, and the sunlight that was apparently capable of refining his body. He felt as if his entire person were being refined inside of some sort of furnace of Heaven and Earth.

“With Heaven and Earth as the furnace, pills can be refined, and so can people!” Meng Hao moved onward. To the shock of the other clan members at the 15,000-meter location, it only took one movement for him to shoot another 3,000 meters to the 18,000-meter position!

By this time, Fang Wei had reached 27,000 meters. Taiyang Zi, Zhou Xin, and Fan Dong’er were at the 24,000-meter position, and Li Ling’er was only 3,000 meters away from Meng Hao’s current location!

By now, all of them had noticed Meng Hao. Of course, none of them were surprised to see him climbing so high. Deep in all of their hearts, they had long since begun to consider Meng Hao to be Chosen just like them.

This was especially true of Li Linge’r, who knew that Meng Hao and Fang Mu were one and the same. Seeing him below her, she clenched her teeth and pushed on higher.

Fang Wei, at the 27,000-meter position, wore the same facial expression as usual. When he looked down at Meng Hao below him, a flicker of scorn could be seen in his eyes. He didn’t care that Meng Hao was rising higher; he chose to disregard him the way he always had.

“My goal is 300,000 meters,” Fang Wei murmured. “I don’t need to compare myself to others.

“As I continue to advance on my path, I will surpass everyone and leave them in my dust....

“I will be the person that everyone tries to catch up to. Fang Hao... your goal is most likely to outdo me. Well, you’ll have to work a bit harder. Don’t get left too far behind.” With that, Fang Wei pushed higher, stepping into the 30,000-meter position.

\*

1. Wang Lin from Renegade Immortal used a divine ability called Sundered Night. This would have been known to readers of ISSTH who

also read Renegade Immortal, but as far as I'm aware, it hasn't come up yet in the translation of Renegade Immortal. The references I found were in the chapters after 1,000, although I suppose it could have come up before then.

# Chapter 934: Neck and Neck

The instant Fang Wei stepped into the 30,000-meter position, the Fang Clan members started getting excited.

“30,000 meters! Prince Wei is the first person to reach 30,000 meters this time!”

“It was inevitable. A hundred years ago, Prince Wei was already close to the Immortal Realm, and in the end, he reached over 69,000 meters!”

“After a hundred years of cultivation, Prince Wei is definitely going to exceed 150,000 meters!”

Discussions raged. When he was born, Fang Wei had not been the center of attention in the Fang Clan. That spot had originally been occupied by Meng Hao.

However, in the hundreds of years after Meng Hao’s parents took him away from Planet East Victory, Fang Wei slowly became the focus, and eventually, the leader of his generation of the clan.

With a status and position like that, as well as the fact that his father and grandfather were leading his bloodline into prominence, Fang Wei had become the most famous person of his generation.

After reaching the 30,000-meter mark, Fang Wei took a deep breath. Cracking sounds could be heard from his body as the boundless sunlight washed over him. When he looked down, he saw everyone beneath him, and although his expression was the same as ever, in his heart, he felt as if he were trampling on the world, proudly placing everyone beneath his feet.

“From up here, they look like ants.

“It is destiny. I am the first person to reach 30,000 meters, therefore, I am also destined to lead the pack the entire way. I will forever... leave everyone behind in my shadow.

“That is because I have only used thirty percent of my cultivation base to reach this 30,000-meter mark.” Fang Wei smiled and closed his eyes.

After a few breaths of time, his eyes opened, and his cultivation base surged. A windstorm kicked up around him, inwardly shaking anyone who looked at it.

The windstorm grew more and more powerful. After three breaths of time, Fang Wei advanced, causing rumbling sounds to echo out. He picked up speed as he flew up into the sky. In the blink of an eye, he was three thousand meters higher. Then six thousand. In the time it takes to breathe in and out, shockingly, he was 45,000 meters high.

He didn't stop there. He continued, his cultivation base surging. Golden light surrounded him, and he turned into a golden streak that shot to a height of 54,000 meters.

From that position, he overlooked all the lands, and his heart filled with even more intense pride.

All of the Fang Clan members below stared up with wide eyes. Taiyang Zi was the second to reach 30,000 meters. After him were Fan Dong'er and Zhou Xin, who reached 30,000 meters at almost exactly the same time.

Taiyang Zi let out a long cry as sunlight surrounded him. He looked like he was a sun of his own, battling to outshine the sun in the sky. Amorphous flames surrounded him, and surprisingly... he did much the same as Fang Wei had, shooting up to 45,000 meters, garnering mass attention.

However, moments later, Fan Dong'er and Zhou Xin also unleashed their cultivation bases. To Chosen like this, reaching 30,000 meters was simply a warmup. After getting accustomed to their surroundings... they would be able to acquire the true good fortune!

The higher they got, the greater that good fortune would be!

Fan Dong'er was surrounded by a magical sea that seemed to sweep her up along with it as it rose higher, to a height of 48,000 meters. At the same time, Taiyang Zi, despite his special method, was beginning to fall behind.

Zhou Xin from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto was surrounded by sword light as he shot upward, reaching a spot somewhere between Fan Dong'er and Taiyang Zi.

Then there were Li Ling'er, Wang Mu, Song Luodan and Sun Hai, all of whom reached 30,000 meters, then unleashed their cultivation bases and began to shoot higher.

The explosive rise of the Chosen caused the Fang Clan members down below to be completely shocked. They knew that in the future, these Chosen would be the most powerful experts in the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Were it not for the fact that they had been waiting for Immortal destiny, any one of them could have long since entered the Immortal Realm. They had built up resources and prepared for years, and once they fused with an Immortality Illumination Vine, they would instantly be able to explode to the peak of the Immortal Realm.

“30,000 meters is only the first step for them. After that, they unleash their cultivation bases, utilizing indescribable energy!”

“Luckily, our Fang Clan’s Prince Wei is in first place!”

“With Prince Wei here, all of the other Chosen from the Ninth Mountain and Sea will have to hold the Fang Clan in awe!”

At the same time that the Chosen started rocketing skyward, Meng Hao advanced for the eighth time, then the ninth, and the tenth.

24,000 meters. 27,000 meters. 30,000 meters!

He moved with incredible speed, 3,000 meters per movement, quickly joining the group of people who had made it to the 30,000-meter point. There, he took a deep breath and looked down at the shrinking land beneath his feet. He saw the ancestral mansion, and all the vast lands surrounding it, including the mountain range that was the Dao of Alchemy Division.

The sunlight here was incredibly intense and hot, enough to melt a Spirit Realm cultivator. Of course, to Meng Hao... that was not enough to

prevent him from advancing.

As he breathed, the heat fused into his body. Sweat poured out of him, each drop of which removed impurities from his body.

He was slowly becoming transparent, and his fleshly body was becoming increasingly powerful.

He clenched his hands into fists, cracking his knuckles as he felt himself growing stronger and stronger.

"The warmup is finished. Now... it's time to burst out!" Eyes glittering, he took a deep breath, and then, his cultivation base began to seethe, and suddenly exploded with power. A vortex formed around him in the blink of an eye.

The vortex spread out in all directions, becoming like a massive black hole that sucked in all of the light and heat and merged it into Meng Hao's body. In that instant, he suddenly shot up at high speed.

The sight was shocking, causing all of the countless Fang Clan members down below to gasp.

They watched as Meng Hao sped upward like an arrow loosed from a bow. Nothing could stand in his way. No obstacle could obstruct him. Rumbling filled the air as he reached 39,000 meters. 45,000 meters. 54,000 meters....

He passed Li Ling'er and the others. He passed Taiyang Zi. He passed Fan Dong'er and Zhou Xin. As he did, their eyes widened. Then he shot even higher.

In the blink of an eye, he reached 60,000 meters!

This development sent huge waves of shock through the Fang Clan members down below. Their eyes went wide with disbelief, and hoarse exclamations rang out.

"That's... that's impossible!"

"He exploded with speed after 30,000 meters, advancing another 30,000 meters in the blink of an eye! I can't believe Fang Hao... is so

shocking!"

"He's the eldest grandson of the direct bloodline. Fang Hao! Back when he was here in the clan, Fang Wei was nothing. Fang Hao is the true Chosen of the Fang Clan!"

Amidst the uproar from the crowd, almost exactly at the same time as Meng Hao flew past the 60,000-meter mark, he was joined by Fang Wei!

Fang Wei was completely shocked, but his expression soon filled with determination. Without the slightest hesitation, he caused his cultivation base to surge, holding nothing back as he flew higher, neck and neck with Meng Hao.

At the same time, Fan Dong'er and the others near her looked on in shock. Then they pushed hard with their cultivation bases, flying higher. Li Ling'er and all the other Chosen were the same. Thanks to the provocation from Meng Hao, all of them pushed higher.

RUMMBLLE!

From the ground, it looked like numerous beams of light were slicing through the air. Highest of all were the two beams of light that were Meng Hao and Fang Wei, and it was impossible to tell who was in front and who was behind.

Further back were Fan Dong'er and Zhou Xin, speeding along. Li Ling'er was close behind, as was Taiyang Zi, thanks to his special technique.

As for everyone else, none were very far behind, and were working hard to catch up.

"Barely two hours have passed. And yet, each rising of the East Ascension Sun lasts for 36 days!"

"Are these people crazy, or what?!?! And look! Fang Hao is going neck and neck with Fang Wei!"

"They're not crazy. That's called being competitive!"

The crowds below felt their hearts trembling. Fang Xi remained at a position several thousand meters up, and even there, it was difficult for

him to absorb the heat and light. Despite that, he was very excited.

He looked up at Meng Hao shooting higher and higher, and his expression was one of extreme enthusiasm.

“Coz, you definitely have to exceed Fang Wei!”

In the ancestral mansion, the Fang Clan Elders were all looking up into the sky, watching as the Chosen used this unique method to engage in battle. The Grand Elder’s face was expressionless; on the other hand, Fang Wei’s father and grandfather, who were not too far away from the Grand Elder, looked extremely grim.

All of the members of the direct bloodline were very excited.

The members of the Dao of Alchemy Division were more excited than anyone else, and were all watching the developments with rapt attention.

“That’s Alchemist Fang Hao!” people cried out. There were now more than ten tier 8 alchemists in the inner mountains who were paying close attention to the proceedings. They were smiling as they watched, but at the same time, their hands never ceased moving as they continuously concocted medicinal pills.

To the Dao of Alchemy Division, the rise of the East Ascension Sun was the perfect time to concoct fire-type medicinal pills!

Pill Elder Fang Danyun sat cross-legged on the mountain peak with the Unicorn Immortals. Shockingly, a seven-colored flame could be seen in the palm of his hand, within which a medicinal pill was beginning to form.

If Meng Hao were there, he would instantly recognize the pill that was being concocted. It was none other than... a Skypalace Sunspirit Pill!

High up in the sky, the sunlight was extremely intense. The higher one got, the more capable it was of burning away anything and everything. Fang Wei’s expression was grim as he unleashed all of his power. However, he was still incapable of passing up Meng Hao. At the moment, neither of them had seized the highest position.

66,000 meters. 72,000 meters. 78,000 meters. 84,000 meters....

It was at that point that Fang Wei snorted coldly. His body trembled for a moment, and then he suddenly exploded with golden light. Within that golden light, he seemed to turn completely golden. Simultaneously, his Dharma Idol appeared behind him, and he suddenly shot up with incredible speed.

"I will always be the person you hope to exceed!" he said. Even as Meng Hao heard his words, Fang Wei shot past him. In the space of a few breaths of time, Fang Wei reached the 90,000-meter mark!

But then, Meng Hao's Dharma Idol appeared behind him as well, and his speed also increased dramatically. He also shot up to 90,000 meters in exactly the same way Fang Wei had moments before!

"You think a bit too highly of yourself," he said coolly.

As soon as Fang Wei reached the 90,000-meter mark, he paused. His looked deeply at Meng Hao for a moment, then ignored him and settled himself cross-legged to meditate.

Meng Hao's expression flickered as he realized that the sky at 90,000 meters was not blue, but almost violet. Furthermore... the sunlight here was also violet!

Apparently, 90,000 meters was a line of demarcation. Meng Hao hesitated for a moment, then crossed his legs and began to breathe deeply. A vortex formed around him as he began to absorb the indescribably hot, violet sunlight.

His fleshly body was now becoming even more powerful!

Soon, he would reach a critical point, the threshold of a true Immortal fleshly body!

# Chapter 935: My Nirvana Fruits!

The violet sunlight contained shocking heat. It was like a violet sea of flames that submerged Meng Hao inside of it, burning him inside and out. He was engulfed in flames.

The impurities within him were being thoroughly scorched away, causing his fleshly body to draw ever closer to that of a true Immortal.

Fang Wei was also absorbing the light and heat. One by one, Fan Dong'er and some of the others arrived at the 90,000-meter level. All of them crossed their legs and began to meditate, absorbing the violet sunlight to strengthen their fleshly bodies.

Most of the other cultivators were down below, beneath the 30,000-meter mark. There were only a handful who were hovering at around 60,000 meters. The division between the various groups was very clear.

In the Fang Clan's ancestral mansion, the Elders were watching the unfolding events closely. As they did, the conversed among themselves.

"The Heavens at 90,000 meters are violet. At 180,000 meters, they become deep violet that borders on black. At 270,000 meters, they're pitch black!"

"Each of these 3 strata of height will provide shocking results in terms of fleshly body tempering. I wonder if anyone will be able to reach 180,000 meters this time!?"

"For countless years, less than thirty people have ever been able to reach 180,000 meters."

Time passed. Eight or nine people were now at the 90,000-meter level, including Meng Hao. All of them had their eyes closed in meditation as they absorbed the violet sunlight. It was also possible to see vortexes spinning around all of them like black holes as they voraciously swallowed up the heat and sunlight.

The most astonishing of all of these were the black holes around Meng Hao and Fang Wei, which were hundreds of meters wide, and absorbed all

of the violet sunlight in their respective areas.

The entire time, it was high noon. The more than 60 hours that passed by were equivalent to the normal passing of three days.

When the 100th hour arrived, Taiyang Zi was the first person to open his eyes. He took a deep breath as rumbling sounds echoed out. His eyes shone with a brilliant light, and incredible heat radiated off of him as he rose to his feet.

"My body has reached its limit here at 90,000 meters. An obstacle has appeared that prevents me from absorbing any more.... The only thing I can do... is to go higher and absorb more intense sunlight and heat. Only then can I destroy that barrier and push my fleshly body to another breakthrough!" He looked around at the others near him, and his gaze eventually came to rest on Meng Hao and Fang Wei.

"To be born in the same era as them... is both a blessing and a curse." He sighed lightly, then gritted his teeth. Eyes shining with determination, he took a deep breath and raised his right hand. A stone suddenly appeared in his palm which, despite the violet light surrounding it, still emanated bright golden rays.

"Sun Immortal Veins!" he roared, clasping the stone tightly. Behind him, an enormous Dharma Idol appeared, several thousand meters tall. Shockingly, the Dharma Idol depicted Taiyang Zi himself, and the Immortality Illumination Vine wrapping around it appeared to be burning.

At the same time, a pattern of veins suddenly spread out across Taiyang Zi's entire body, causing him to surge with shocking power.

"When this is over, it doesn't matter what the level of my fleshly body is! I'm going into secluded meditation, and I'm going to break through to the Immortal Realm!" Taiyang Zi's body burned like a shooting star as he shot past the 90,000-meter level, rapidly rising several thousand meters. He reached the 120,000-meter level in the space of a few breaths, which was when he finally started to slow down. Despite that, he gritted his teeth and continued onward.

He next broke through to 150,000 meters. At 159,000 meters, he

coughed up a mouthful of blood, and the stone in his hand began to crumble. His body looked as if it was about to melt, but he forcibly held it together, crossed his legs, and began to meditate.

"I still have three of these precious Divine Sunstones. However... this is the absolute limit for my fleshly body. If I go forward even one more meter, then I'll die!" His expression was one of defiance, and yet, he closed his eyes and absorbed the sunlight madly.

Soon after, Sun Hai opened his eyes. His energy surged like that of an Emperor as he produced a crown and placed it on his head. Then, he began to rise, struggling to a height of 156,000 meters before finally coming to a stop.

Wang Mu followed close behind Sun Hai. His cultivation base roared as a strange aura appeared around him that seemed to contain elements of the rising sun. In his hand was a jade slip that seemed able to dispel any darkness of night that he might perceive around him. Shockingly, he rose to a height of 162,000 meters!

When the 126th hour arrived, Li Ling'er opened her eyes. At the same time, so did Song Luodan. Neither of them looked at the other, and yet they simultaneously produced objects from within their robes.

Li Ling'er pulled out a magical bottle that rose to float above her head. Occasionally, drops of liquid would seep out. When they splashed onto Li Ling'er, they transformed into steam that she then absorbed.

Song Luodan pulled out a Feng Shui Compass composed entirely of translucent crystal, which emanated a pulsating qi that he breathed in through his nose and mouth.

Similar to Taiyang Zi, these two were using items prepared especially for them by their respective organizations, treasures useful in resisting sunlight. Their energy surged, and they shot higher up at almost the exact same time.

"They're Chosen, but so am I!" thought Song Luodan. "Only by trampling them beneath my feet can I succeed in treading my path!"

“Immortal destiny has appeared, and I have an Immortality Illumination Vine,” thought Li Ling’er. “I can see my path to Immortality, and I will succeed!”

120,000 meters. 150,000 meters.... At 165,000 meters, Song Luodan coughed up a mouthful of blood. His body was wreathed in flames, and he finally had no choice but to stop. Li Ling’er held on until 174,000 meters before stopping, her face pale. Blood oozed out of her mouth, which instantly transformed into a bloody steam.

Song Luodan chuckled bitterly, closed his eyes, and began to absorb sunlight. Li Ling’er said nothing. She looked at the 180,000-meter position, only a few thousand meters away, and sighed inwardly.

Her current position was the absolute limit for her fleshly body.

Time passed. When the 200th hour arrived, Zhou Xin from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto and Fan Dong’er both opened their eyes. They, too, produced sun-resisting treasures and flew up at high speed. They passed everyone, reaching 177,000 meters before their faces went pale and they started to slow down. However, they still managed to force their way to a height of 180,000 meters before they each coughed up three successive mouthfuls of blood, then trembled and settled down cross-legged, their bodies wreathed in flames.

This scene caused all the observing Fang Clan members to tremble inwardly with shock.

“They... really deserve to be called Chosen!”

“All of them are fighting with all of their might! For their own Dao, for the path they wish to tread!”

“As Chosen, the pressure they feel and the responsibility they have are equally weighty! They aren’t willing to let others supersede them, and they’re all striving to leave behind their own mark of glory....”

When the 240th hour arrived, only Meng Hao and Fang Wei remained at the 90,000-meter mark. At this point, Fang Wei’s eyes opened, and he looked over at Meng Hao, his expression grim.

“Still haven’t reached your limit yet...? Well, that doesn’t matter. Goals are everything, and I... have only one goal. To reach 300,000 meters!” Eyes shining brightly, he rose to his feet. Unlike the other Chosen, he used no precious treasure. Instead, his energy burst out, sending golden light emanating out in all directions.

Finally, his Dharma Idol appeared!

In addition to the golden light, his body emanated the aura of reincarnation. It grew stronger and stronger until, in the end, it created a vortex around him. Fang Wei then began to rise up higher into the sky.

In one move, he rose 30,000 meters!

When he reached 120,000 meters, he began to slow down. However, Fan Dong’er and everyone else up ahead him looked on with wide eyes.

“He’s not using any magical items! He’s relying only on his cultivation base and his fleshly body!”

“He’s using a unique divine ability. That’s the aura of reincarnation.... That must be one of the Fang Clan’s special magics, One Thought Reincarnation Incantation!”

Everyone in the Fang Clan was watching as Fang Wei reached the 120,000-meter mark, including the Elders in the ancestral mansion.

“Reincarnation Second Life!” roared Fang Wei. Immediately, the aura of reincarnation that surrounded him exploded out. Rumbling could be heard as, shockingly... a second Dharma Idol appeared behind him.

This Dharma Idol didn’t look like his first Dharma Idol. It was blurry and unclear.

As soon as the second Dharma Idol appeared, Fang Wei’s body flickered, and he continued to advance, quickly reaching a height of 150,000 meters.

A hubbub of conversation rose up from down below, and shock filled the hearts of Song Luodan and the other Chosen.

“Reincarnation Third Life!” Fang Wei cried out. As his shocking call echoed about... a third Dharma Idol appeared behind him. His cultivation

base roared to monstrous heights as he advanced a third time. Rumbling could be heard as he instantly reached a height of 180,000 meters!

He planned to put everyone beneath his feet!

All the crowds were in an uproar. Actually, not everyone in the Fang Clan could actually see 180,000 meters into the sky. Only the most powerful experts could do so. However, those who could see were incredibly excited, especially the members of Fang Wei's bloodline, who were elated.

"The Reincarnation Incantation can reincarnate four lives. Prince Wei's latent talent is so shocking that he's already refined three lives!"

"He... he isn't even in the Immortal Realm yet! Once he breaks through, he'll definitely be a 90-meridian peak Immortal!!"

"With a Chosen like that, our Fang Clan is destined to last throughout the ages!"

Fang Wei hovered at a height of 180,000 meters. From this vantage point, he could see the arcing curvature of the planet, and almost seemed to be floating in the starry sky. He did not cough up any blood as he looked down at the other Chosen with their varied expressions, and at Meng Hao.

When he looked at Meng Hao, he realized that Meng Hao's eyes were not closed. Instead, he was staring back at Fang Wei with an abstruse look in his eyes.

Meng Hao had actually opened his eyes earlier, when Fang Wei had begun to fly up. The instant their eyes met, Fang Wei could see a piercing glow in Meng Hao's eyes, and a smile on his face.

Next, Meng Hao's lips moved slightly, and although he didn't speak, Fang Wei instantly knew what he was saying.

"Are my Nirvana Fruits working well for you?"

Immediately, Fang Wei's eyes widened, and his expression turned grim.

# Chapter 936: Meng Hao vs. Fang Wei

When Fang Wei started flying higher into the sky earlier, Meng Hao awoke from meditation, not naturally, but because he had felt the intense sensation of something calling to him, something very familiar.

That sense of familiarity came from Fang Wei.

It was a sensation like nothing else, and it came specifically from Fang Wei's second and third Dharma Idols. It was now obvious that they were calling out to Meng Hao's blood.

He had felt that there was something familiar about Fang Wei's aura from the very beginning. He'd had his speculations, but it wasn't until now that those speculations were validated. 1

From Fang Wei's second and third Dharma Idols, Meng Hao got the feeling that... they actually belonged to him.

They were... manifestations of his Nirvana Fruits!

Now that the truth had presented itself in front of Meng Hao, he was unexpectedly calm. The entire clan had witnessed the Grand Elder giving him "his" Nirvana Fruits, so bringing up the subject would be useless.

Meng Hao smiled, a cold smile that contained no anger, but rather, calmness.

He slowly stood up, then began to fly upward, relying on no magical items to resist the sunlight and heat. He put the matter of the Nirvana Fruits aside for now, and instead focused on a Daoist incantation.

Withering Flame Demon Magic True Self Dao!

Flame Character Incantation!

A blistering heat rose up inside of him that rapidly spread throughout his entire body. The heat turned into a sea of flames that spread out from Meng Hao, raging up to merge with the violet sunlight and absorb its heat.

His Dharma Idol appeared behind him, and it was also surrounded by a sea of flames, making it look incredibly shocking.

In that moment, his fleshly body seemed to be on the verge of making a breakthrough as he madly absorbed all of the intense heat around him.

Within his mind was not just the Flame Character Incantation; he also had the Withering Character Incantation and the Self Character Incantation. These three Daoist incantations all seemed to merge together inside of him. Under the intense heat, Meng Hao's body began to wither, and yet, within that withering was an intense life force. 2

In fact, as he withered, more violet sunlight and even more intense heat were incited by the Flame Character Incantation, causing his body to recover. The withering was then focused inside of him, transforming into a true black hole.

Meng Hao's Flame Character Incantation rapidly solidified as it absorbed the vast amounts of violet sunlight, causing the incantation to become thoroughly completed.

"The Withering Flame Demon Magic True Self Dao contains seven incantations," Meng Hao murmured. As of this moment, he gained more understanding of this Daoist magic that he had picked up in that primordial Demon Immortal Sect.

"Even so, it doesn't quite measure up to the Fang Clan's Reincarnation Incantation." Meng Hao sighed. The One Thought Reincarnation Incantation was one of the four great Daoist magics of the Fang Clan, and was famous throughout the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Those four great Daoist magics were Daos of the clan, and even Meng Hao couldn't study them unless he exchanged enough merit points for it. Even then, he wouldn't personally be able to master them without the help of a Patriarch-level expert.

"Fire.... Light...." Meng Hao was suddenly lost in thought, and began to see images in his mind. Within the vision, he saw a spherical mass of fire and light that was like a sun, or an eye.

It was none other than... the Essence of Divine Flame beneath the lands of South Heaven!

That was the most intense mass of fire and light that Meng Hao had ever seen in his entire life!

He closed his eyes and began to recall his experience with the Essence of Divine Flame. Things began to grow clearer as he remembered returning to the third level of the underground land. In the moment that he had acquired some of that Essence, what he had seen was not the light of a sun, but rather... the flaming eye formed by the Essence of Divine Flame!

In the same moment that Meng Hao was experiencing this vision, back in the lands of South Heaven, in the third level of that underground land, a place guarded by all the bizarre beasts, within a world of flames, the eye of the Essence of Divine Flame suddenly... opened!

The moment that the eye opened, it seemed to form a resonance with the image of the Essence of Divine Flame that existed in Meng Hao's mind. Rumbling sounds could be heard, and Meng Hao's energy level suddenly began to rise.

At the same time, the sea of flames around Meng Hao suddenly turned black. They swirled around him, transforming into an enormous spherical globe.

Meng Hao existed in the very center of that globe, held up by his Dharma Idol. From a distance, it almost looked like he had... become a sun!

This sun was far bigger and more realistic than the sun created by Taiyang Zi's divine ability, and the heat it radiated was boundless.

Down in the ancestral mansion, the faces of the Elders who were watching the scene instantly flickered with shock. Even the Grand Elder, who had remained completely calm this entire time, felt his eyes going wide.

"That's... a projection! A projection of the sun!"

"What divine ability is Fang Hao using!? I can't believe he's created a projection of the actual sun!"

"In all the past years, only two people have ever created a projection of

the sun during the rise of the East Ascension Sun, and they were Patriarchs, tens of thousands of years ago! And yet Fang Hao... is actually doing just that!"

Deep down in the Fang Clan ancestral mansion, in a stony cavern, seven archaic old men sat cross-legged.

These seven were all incredibly famous figures. If they emerged into the outside world, they would cause a huge stir in the starry sky, and could suppress all living things.

They sat cross-legged in meditation, and looked as if no aura of life existed in them whatsoever. The color of their clothing was varied, and currently, the old man who wore a crimson robe suddenly opened his eyes.

He slowly raised his head, and his gaze penetrated through the rock and stone into the outside world.

"The aura of Essence...."

Back outside, in the 90,000-meter position up in the sky, Meng Hao slowly opened his eyes. To those looking on, it appeared as if he was surrounded by a projection of the sun. However, Meng Hao knew that this was not the case. Instead... he had used his memories of the Essence of Divine Flame, as well as the Flame Character Incantation, to borrow the power of the sun and copy its image.

He looked up at Fang Wei in his position at the 180,000-meter mark, and his expression became even more placid than before. Then, he lifted his right leg and then pushed it down, propelling himself high into the air!

It was one movement, but it caused massive rumbling to fill the air. The void rippled, and even the sun high in the sky seemed to distort. At the same time, the sun surrounding Meng Hao began to expand.

The path that stretched out in front of Meng Hao's eyes seemed to shrink, as if the intervening 90,000 meters were nothing more than a single meter!

One movement spanned a single meter... but caused him to leap 90,000 meters! 3

He passed Li Ling'er, superseded Sun Hai and Taiyang Zi, and appeared directly above Fan Dong'er!

He... moved directly to a height of 180,000 meters. When he appeared next to Fang Wei, Fang Wei's eyes widened, and he shook visibly.

Meng Hao was now radiating boundless violet light in the shape of a sun. It was a sight that shook Heaven and Earth, leaving everyone astonished. People watching from down below even had the mistaken impression that the sun had descended!

"You!!" said Fang Wei. This was the first time he had become flustered. His face flickered, and he was so shaken by Meng Hao that he involuntarily retreated backward.

Fan Dong'er was panting as she stared up at Meng Hao. She had to admit that as of this moment, Meng Hao was shocking even to her. He had formed a projection of the sun, and crossed 90,000 meters in a single movement! It was terrifying!

Zhou Xin of the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto looked on with a sharp gaze, virtually unable to believe the feeling of defeat that existed in his heart.

Li Ling'er took a deep breath as she gaped in shock. She knew that Meng Hao was Fang Mu, and she knew that with his latent talent, he was the number one figure in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Even still, she was once again completely shaken by him.

Gradually, Meng Hao's position in her mind was reaching the pinnacle, like a huge mountain that was impossible to supersede.

Song Luodan trembled and bitterly lowered his head. Taiyang Zi stared blankly for a long moment before sighing.

"It is a blessing to be able to live in the same age as him, and thus, bear witness to his actions. It is a curse... because his brilliance casts everyone else in shadow."

Wang Mu's fists were clenched tightly, and deep inside, he wanted to fight. His gaze was defiant as he repeatedly told himself that his surname was Wang, and that the surname Wang... had a very special meaning!

To be a Chosen of the Wang Clan meant that you didn't lose to anyone!

Sun Hai was shaken, and chuckled bitterly. He actually had no desire to compete with Meng Hao, and yet, he still sighed.

Meng Hao hovered at the 180,000-meter position. Here, the sky was deep violet, almost black. It was so dark that only by looking closely could you pick up the violet hues. In addition, the sunlight was vastly more powerful than at the 90,000-meter position, so much so that it seemed capable of melting the body.

Even magical items would be instantly transformed into a liquid that would quickly become nothing more than steam.

However, Meng Hao's expression was calm. He was like a black hole, furiously absorbing the sunlight and heat. The sun that surrounded him looked just as magnificent as the sun that hung up above in the Heavens.

Meng Hao turned to look at the grim-faced Fang Wei.

"Fang Wei," he said calmly. "Do you want to have a little competition? Let's see... who can go the highest!"

Fang Wei's eyes widened as he stared at Meng Hao.

"We don't even need to bet anything specific," Meng Hao said with a slight smile. "However, the winner will get to punch the loser. Once. It's just that... I really feel like punching you."

Fang Wei snorted coldly, declining to say anything in response. Instead, he responded with action. The three Dharma Idols behind him suddenly exploded with power, and he himself shot high up into the sky.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as usual. As soon as Fang Wei flew up, he followed, and the two of them turned into bright streaks of light that shot upward.

In the blink of an eye, they had reached 210,000 meters!

Meng Hao's entire body was covered in flames. The sun which surrounded him was still in place, despite the fact that the light and heat here was ten times as powerful as it had been at the 180,000-meter

position. Fang Wei was trembling, and the Dharma Statues behind him fell to pieces. Gritting his teeth, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a medicinal pill, which he immediately swallowed.

It was a Skypalace Sunspirit Pill, and as soon as he consumed it, he threw his head back and roared, then shot even higher than before.

225,000 meters. 240,000 meters!

The sky was now completely black. Fang Wei's body was in flames, and fissures were spreading out across his skin. Even with the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill, he was incapable of staying at such a height for very long.

Meng Hao's sun was beginning to collapse, and his body withered. His flesh and blood appeared to be evaporating and dispersing. The intensity at the 240,000-meter position was ten times as powerful as before, and the heat and light had reached a terrifying level. However, even as his body withered, he looked over at Fang Wei with a cold gaze.

"What's wrong?" he asked. "Can't keep up?"

To Fang Wei, this incredible heat and light was terrifying. It was the same for Meng Hao. However, there was something unique about Meng Hao; however ruthlessly he treated others... he treated himself even more ruthlessly.

Meng Hao also had a Skypalace Sunspirit Pill, and yet, he didn't consume it. He wanted to use Fang Wei's arrogance to bring him down, to openly, and without any tricks, mess with him until he was destroyed and brought to ruin!

He also wanted to damage Fang Wei's Dao heart, by defeating him without even needing to consume a single medicinal pill. It would be like a mortal blow to Fang Wei.

Considering Fang Wei's level of intelligence, how could he not understand that Meng Hao was leading him on? This was obviously... a battle for the position of number one Chosen in the Fang Clan!

As of this moment, all of the Fang Clan's experts, all of the Elders, and even the Grand Elder, were paying rapt attention!

1. Meng Hao mentioned in [chapter 897](#) that he sensed something familiar about Fang Wei.
2. Meng Hao acquired the Withering Flame Demon Magic True Self Dao in the Demon Immortal Pagoda in [chapter 584](#). He reached a culmination of enlightenment about it in [chapter 720](#), outside the Ancient Dao Lake. He used the “Self Character Incantation” to create his second true self, starting in [chapter 733](#). He combined the “Withering Character Incantation” with his Blood Demon Grand magic in [chapter 770](#), and killed a Dao Seeking expert with the same incantation in [chapter 774](#). It was mentioned quite a few other times, these are just some of the highlights.
3. Because of how I convert the measurements to meters, and also because of how Chinese uses special words for certain units of measurement (they have a unique word for 10,000), this sounds a lot cooler in Chinese. “Zhang” is about 3 meters and “chi” is about 1/3 of that, in other words, one meter. The direct translation would be: It seemed as if a three 10,000 zhang distance had become three chi! One movement was three chi... but he stepped three 10,000 zhangs!

# Chapter 937: One Punch!

Fang Wei's eyes were bright red as he glared at Meng Hao. The pride in his heart had been trampled upon; he had already consumed the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill, and yet... he was still not able to shake Meng Hao.

Even more impossible for him to accept was that from the very beginning until now, Meng Hao still had not used any external aid. He was relying only on his fleshly body and cultivation base, and yet was still capable of reaching this incredible height.

That fact was a massive blow to Fang Wei.

"I'm the number one Chosen of the Fang Clan!" he thought, gritting his teeth. "From the moment I was born, I was destined... to shake the Ninth Mountain and Sea!" He lifted his right hand, within which appeared a bone fragment.

It was covered with intricately carved magical symbols, and emanated a barbaric aura, as well as a feeling of incredible ancientness. Fang Wei violently clenched his hand around the bone fragment, which did not fracture, but rather sank down into the flesh of his palm.

Drops of blood appeared, along with a faint, bizarre power. As the pieces of the bone fragment merged into his body, Fang Wei began to tremble, and blue veins popped out on his face.

"I, Fang Wei... will never lose!" As he spoke the words, rumbling echoed out, and he once again rose higher into the sky.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered. He could have allowed his Eternal Stratum to heal him, but had not done so yet. He wanted to completely and utterly destroy Fang Wei's self-confidence, to thoroughly crush him and drag him down into destruction.

Enduring the intense light and heat, Meng Hao also shot upward.

The two of them became beams of colorful light as they ascended. Anyone who could see them, be they the Chosen from the various clans or the Fang Clan experts, watched as Meng Hao and Fang Wei shot up into

the sky with determination and roiling energy.

249,000 meters!

Rumbling echoed out at this incredibly high position. Blood sprayed from Fang Wei's mouth; even with the power of the bone fragment, he had barely managed to force his way those extra 9,000 meters higher. This position was truly his final limit.

He had possessed only one Skypalace Sunspirit Pill. Such pills were rare, even for Fang Wei. His father and grandfather had paid a steep price to get their hands on a single Skypalace Sunspirit Pill from the Dao of Alchemy Division.

After all, the Dao of Alchemy Division could act autonomously in the clan, and not even the Grand Elder could give them orders, unless the clan was in a state of war.

In the same moment that Fang Wei couldn't hold out any longer, the black sun surrounding Meng Hao suddenly crumbled away in layers, transforming into countless fragments that rapidly evaporated due to the intense heat.

Meng Hao was now completely exposed, and his skin began to wither up. Soon, he looked like nothing more than a desiccated corpse that might melt away into death at any moment.

And yet, his eyes sparkled as he looked at Fang Wei.

"Admit defeat?" he asked, his voice hoarse.

Fang Wei's heart trembled as he gazed upon Meng Hao's intense strength. He saw Meng Hao's withered body, and to Fang Wei, it appeared as if he could proceed higher only a few hundred meters, Meng Hao would be unable to keep up, and would be killed by the power of the sun.

As he hovered there silently, a gleam of madness suddenly appeared in his eyes. He said nothing, but instead threw his head back and let out a mighty roar. His body shook as his three Dharma Idols suddenly appeared.

"Three Lives of Reincarnation! Glory of a Lifetime!" he howled, flashing

an incantation gesture that caused all three Dharma Idols to superimpose. Next, an aura that appeared to be Fang Wei's rose up, growing stronger and stronger until it reached a boundless level.

"I am Fang Wei, and I... will NEVER lose!" He clenched his teeth and once again rose up higher, surrounded by rumbling sounds. As he soared higher, his body began to wither, and the flame of his life force began to grow dim. And yet, looking every bit like a shooting star, he continued to rise higher.

252,000 meters. 258,000 meters. 267,000 meters!

Fang Wei's blood was being transformed into mist as he pushed himself higher. Meng Hao followed silently, and his body became even more withered. His cultivation base was in full rotation, and his Dharma Idol was supporting him from behind. His energy was operating at the full peak.

Especially noteworthy was his Immortal meridian, which glowed with intense light that filled his body. A Blood Demon head materialized around him, and the Ninth Mountain appeared, as well as the Black White Pearls.

He also used A Writ of Karma, as well as various other divine abilities and magical techniques. His aura surged to its limit as he combined everything at his disposal to keep pace with Fang Wei. Soon, he too arrived at the 267,000-meter position.

It was at that point that Meng Hao coughed up a mouthful of blood. His body was now withered virtually to its limit, to the point where it seemed that if Fang Wei took only one more step, Meng Hao would be left behind and would be unable to keep up.

Fang Wei looked at Meng Hao, and his eyes blazed with the desire to fight. From the very beginning until this very moment, Meng Hao had constantly seemed to be on the verge of death. And yet, as he advanced, he was not melted by the sun.

Fang Wei had already gone all out, and had almost reached 270,000 meters, and yet, it seemed that he would be incapable of surpassing Meng

Hao.

Both Meng Hao and Fang Wei hovered at 267,000 meters, and neither one of them was in the lead position.

“Fang Hao....” said Fang Wei. He gazed at Meng Hao with a look of madness. Panting, he slowly lifted up his right foot. It was a simple motion, but it caused his body to tremble violently, clearly on the verge of complete collapse.

At that point, back down in the ancestral mansion, Fang Wei’s father’s face fell, and he suddenly called out.

“Wei’er, just remain in that position and meditate! Get used to your surroundings before proceeding higher!” It wasn’t just Fang Wei’s father who had such a reaction. There were other Elders of his bloodline who all started calling out to Fang Wei to stop trying to get higher.

“Fang Wei, don’t fall into his vicious plot! Don’t be rash!”

“Fang Wei, you need to rest and adjust your breathing! Your goal has nothing to do with other people, it is Heaven itself!”

Fang Wei said nothing. Neither did Meng Hao, who simply hovered off to the side, looking coldly at Fang Wei.

Time passed. After the space of several breaths had passed, Fang Wei’s eyes suddenly filled with determination and he stared at Meng Hao.

“I know the meaning behind your actions earlier,” he said. “I also know what you’re trying to do. You want to coax me into competing with you in the hopes of delivering a blow to my Dao heart. Such things... I understand.” His eyes gleamed with the light of obsession.

“However!” he continued. “I am Fang Wei, and I won’t lose to anyone. You want to fight? Then let’s fight! You want to compete? I’ll compete with you! I’m going to move one step further, and if you’re good enough, see if you can keep up!” Eyes bloodshot, Fang Wei lowered his right foot and moved higher again.

In that instant, his grandfather let out a bellow of rage.

“Fang Wei, get back here!”

Rumbling echoed out. As Fang Wei finished moving up, blood spurted out all over his body, and his hair was burned completely away. His skin began to burst, and he appeared to be engulfed in a sea of flames.

He even began to stagger, as if he couldn’t support his own weight. However, at the same time that this was happening, Meng Hao also moved higher. Similar rumbling echoed out, and he was also inundated in a sea of flames. He also began to tremble, and yet... he remained solidly in place. Then he looked back at Fang Wei.

Blood sprayed from Fang Wei’s mouth, and he tumbled backward.

Meng Hao expression was a complicated one. There were actually some things about Fang Wei that he felt to be worthy of praise. He had stubbornness, which was something incredibly valuable to cultivators. However, everything was a matter of perspective, and because of the way things were, Meng Hao could never sympathize with him.

“You’re simply not good enough,” he said calmly. “You even have my Nirvana Fruits, and yet you still don’t measure up.” Those words were like a sharp sword that stabbed directly into Fang Wei’s heart. His face went ashen, and he coughed up more blood.

“All you did was get one step past me!” he said, gritting his teeth as the flames surged around his body. He had only fallen back one pace, but then held his place, forcing his body to stay together as he glared at Meng Hao.

“One step?” said Meng Hao softly. It was at this point that he unleashed his Eternal stratum. It exploded out, and in the blink of an eye, Meng Hao’s withered frame began to heal. His hair grew out long, and his skin shone with a gleaming luster. All of his injuries were now completely restored!

This development caused Fang Wei’s face to fall again. His mind reeled, and the blood drained from his face as he tumbled further backward.

“Impossible! This... this....”

“Why do you think it’s impossible?” Meng Hao said coolly. With that, his

body flickered, except, instead of moving up higher, he appeared directly in front of Fang Wei.

"You lose," he said, and with that, he punched out toward Fang Wei.

Fang Wei's three Dharma Idols reappeared as Meng Hao's punch descended, and the aura of reincarnation exploded out. He went all out to resist Meng Hao, and yet, at that moment, Meng Hao said four words.

"A Writ of Karma!"

BOOOMMM!!

One devastating punch slammed into Fang Wei, sending him hurtling from a height of 270,000 meters in the sky all the way down toward the ground.

One devastating punch shattered two of Fang Wei's three Dharma Idols. Those Dharma Idols had been formed from Meng Hao's Nirvana Fruits, and by forming ties of destiny with them using A Writ of Karma, they were instantly shattered and sealed.

The deeper the Karma, the more intense the power!

In the instant that Meng Hao's blow landed, seven or eight figures shot up from the ground below to appear around Fang Wei. They grabbed him, and immediately poured cultivation base power into him to heal him. Then they looked up angrily at Meng Hao, killing intent surging.

At the same time, more than a hundred powerful streams of divine sense immediately formed near Meng Hao. From the look of it, if he made any further threatening actions toward Fang Wei, they would exterminate him immediately.

Even more shocking, the Grand Elder's gaze shot up to the 270,000-meter position, where it hung over Meng Hao like an infinitely sharp blade, ready to cleave his life force away.

When Meng Hao sensed all of the divine sense focused on him, as well as the murderous looks being given him by the seven or eight elders down below, he simply smiled arrogantly.

He had never had any plans to wrest back his Nirvana Fruits and kill Fang Wei. If he did do something like that, it would be in a way that nobody in the entire clan could voice a word of dissent.

He had punched Fang Wei just now for the purpose of teaching him a lesson, nothing else.

Of course, it was a very tough lesson.

Ignoring all of the divine sense, the murderous looks from the seven or eight Elders down below, and the gaze of the Grand Elder, Meng Hao looked up into the pitch black sky, and his eyes gleamed with anticipation.

"I wonder... how far up I can get?!" With that, he turned and transformed into a beam of light that shot upward. Everyone down below watched in shock as he rocketed upward. Apparently... Fang Wei was nothing more than a passing distraction who, after being surpassed, wasn't worth looking back at.

# Chapter 938: Rise of a Blazing Sun

To the cultivators down below, Meng Hao turning and heading further up into the sky made their impression of him grow even greater. As for the Chosen up in the sky with him, the increasing distance between him and them seemed to represent the vast difference in their levels, a difference that only continued to increase.

Profound sensations of utter defeat and powerlessness appeared in their hearts.

Fan Dong'er watched silently, even defiantly. After a long moment, her eyes glittered.

"He has his road, and I have my path. His road and my path might have different ends, but... the journey is the most important part!"

Zhou Xin's eyes widened as he looked at Meng Hao. He felt incredible pressure that, for some reason, made catching up to Meng Hao become his new primary goal.

Sun Hai, Taiyang Zi, and Song Luodan all watched silently. Deep in their hearts, all of them had a similar feeling; being born in the same age as Meng Hao was both a blessing and a curse. Gradually, they began to form a sympathetic resonance with him, and yet, that resonance quickly shattered and was replaced with looks of determined obsession. This was the case even with Sun Hai.

"This is just a little contest about the sun," he thought. "The path into the future is long; there will be plenty of other chances to outdo him."

Li Ling'er was the only one among the group who understood Meng Hao better than everyone else. Her hands were clenched into fists, and her teeth grated together as she rotated her cultivation base and began to rise up into the sky.

Wang Mu was panting. He stared at Meng Hao getting further and further away, and the desire to fight him burned within his eyes.

Down on the ground, the Grand Elder sat there silently, as did the clan

members from the neutral bloodlines. No one viewed Meng Hao with indifference, the way they had previously. Things had changed.

Looking at Meng Hao now made them feel as if they were looking at a future Paragon!

This was even true of the Grand Elder. Now, there was something different flickering in his eyes as he watched Meng Hao.

Of course, there was no need to even mention the members of the direct bloodline, who were boiling with excitement.

The only people who were grim-faced were the members of Fang Wei's bloodline. Their killing intent was strong as they looked at Fang Wei up in midair, coughing up blood. Although there were clan members next to him, healing him, the injuries to his fleshly body were so great that he was incapable of preventing his Dharma Idols from collapsing.

That collapse seemed to contain the power of some sort of natural law, as if something had been indelibly branded onto Fang Wei's soul. He could only watch as two of his three Dharma Idols shattered into countless pieces that were unable to reform.

Fang Wei's father and grandfather even teleported up to him. His grandfather scanned his wounds, and his face grew extremely unsightly.

"What a vicious little son of a bitch," he said, killing intent flickering in his eyes. "This is the power of Karma. That bastard must be connected to the Ji Clan somehow. He's sealed Fang Wei's Dharma Idols!"

Fang Wei's face was ashen, but he remained calm. He even prevented his father from treating his injuries, and hovered there in midair, teetering unsteadily as he looked at Meng Hao far, far up above.

Meng Hao was a beam of light high up in the air, shooting higher and higher. He looked almost like a bird, wreathed in flames. He was not living within those flames, but being consumed by them, an undying phoenix with burning wings that soared high into the sky!

As he soared through the air, the essence of the Flying Rain-Dragon that had existed inside of him for so long suddenly surged into action, causing

a gentle power to spread throughout his body.

270,000 meters!

276,000 meters!

282,000 meters!

Even when he reached that position, he continued to go higher. The determination in his eyes increased, and the flames that burned his body raged into a peak of intensity. Even with the healing of his Eternal stratum, he would soon be completely destroyed.

However, the impending failure of his Eternal stratum didn't cause Meng Hao to hesitate. He immediately pulled out... the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill that he had personally concocted!

This would be his first time consuming the pill, and the first time he would rely on its power. As soon as the pill entered his mouth, his body filled with rumbling, and a boundless life force exploded out from within him. It was fiery, and contained a light and heat which stemmed from Heaven and Earth, from plants and vegetation, from the twelve 2-hour time periods in a day. That light and heat then transformed into a flame of life force.

As that flame surged inside of him, it caused his Eternal stratum to suddenly roar to life.

285,000 meters. 291,000 meters. 297,000 meters!

He flew like a phoenix reborn from within the flames, as if he had been born with the will to soar, as if he was a sovereign of the sky, a Flying Rain-Dragon!

As the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill dissolved and spread through his body, not only did it fill him with a boundless life force, it also caused his fleshly body to grow even tougher than before.

It was as if a sun now existed inside of him, a sun that radiated an everburning light and heat. It even made it so that Meng Hao seemed to form a resonance with Heaven and Earth, and with the sun that existed

outside of the starry sky.

That resonance caused Meng Hao to suddenly be partially enlightened regarding certain natural laws, although they were vague and he couldn't quite grasp them. He could sense that these natural laws contained the Dao of the sun, a Dao that became clearer the closer one got to the sun itself.

"If I had one more Skypalace Sunspirit Pill...." he thought. His eyes glittered as he used the power of the pill to begin to push himself through the final stretch to reach 300,000 meters!

RUMBLE!

He rose up like a blazing sun, the focus of all attention as he... passed the 300,000 meter mark!

Throughout countless years, and all the generations of Chosen, no one in the Immortal Realm or under had ever reached this height. From his position, Meng Hao could see the vast majority of Planet East Victory.

All of the other Chosen in midair stared with wide eyes. All of the other powerful experts of the Fang Clan were completely silent for a moment before bursting into conversation.

"He... he flew up to 300,000 meters!!"

"From ancient times until now in the Fang Clan, nobody in the Immortal Realm or under has ever reached 300,000 meters! Fang Hao is the first!"

"Unheard-of! This Fang Hao has suppressed all of the other Chosen, even Prince Wei! He's now the complete center of attention!"

As the conversations buzzed in the ancestral mansion, the Elders' eyes filled with strange gleams.

Of course, the Elders were able to keep themselves under control much better than everyone else. Meng Hao really was the first person in the Immortal Realm or under to ever reach 300,000 meters. However, there were in fact a few Ancient Realm cultivators who could accomplish this same thing.

And yet, this trial by fire of fleshly body tempering was good fortune set aside for members of the younger generation. The clan experts of the Ancient Realm held their training sessions in other places.

Fang Wei stared fixedly at Meng Hao's receding figure. Watching him reach a height of 300,000 meters felt like having a massive fist slam ruthlessly into his chest. Blood oozed out of his mouth, and his expression darkened. Inside, he was nearly going mad with defiance.

"I should be up there... not him!"

As everyone was shaken mentally, Meng Hao hovered at 300,000 meters. It was impossible to breathe this high up, but with Meng Hao's cultivation base, he didn't need to breathe. He hovered there like a peerless Paragon.

Because of his Eternal stratum, his fleshly body was very close to that of a true Immortal. Furthermore, he tread a path that was different than everyone else, a path that even exceeded Pill Demon and his true Immortal destiny. His path... was to become a true Immortal among true Immortals!

His was a path in which he relied only on himself. He needed no Immortal destiny. He would move directly into true Immortality. In fact... among the few people who tread such a path, his was unique. He already had an Immortal meridian inside of him, an Immortal meridian... from a primordial Daoist Rite Temple!

All of these things were reasons why he now hovered above 300,000 meters!

Here, the light and heat surrounded Meng Hao in a strange way. He couldn't see the light, or feel the heat... he existed inside of the light, and was being smelting in the heat itself.

He slowly looked up, and began to tremble as his fleshly body was tempered to an even greater degree.

Up ahead of him was the boundless starry sky, and then beyond that, he could see... the actual, true sun!

It was an enormous, crimson sphere, seemingly in the depths of the

starry sky, illuminating everything.

When Meng Hao looked at it, he could sense the Dao of the sun, much more clearly than before. However, it still wasn't clear enough. Even flying up 300,000 meters left the sun too far away!

"My fleshly body is just a hair away from a breakthrough!!"

His eyes filled with determination. Everyone believed that he had reached the ends of the sky and could go no further. However, he charged onward, using the power of his cultivation base, his fleshly body, and the sun of the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill to support him as he flew.

303,000 meters. 309,000 meters. 315,000 meters.... His flight speed was not incredible. Time went by, and he continued higher!

Everyone down below was in a complete uproar.

"I can't believe he's still going!!"

"300,000 is an end mark! Going any further vastly increases the danger. At a certain point, he's going to step into the starry sky. That's a place where only Dao Realm experts can enter!"

"What is he doing...?"

Chosen. Clan members. Everyone was astonished.

When he reached 315,000 meters, everyone thought that he was finished. But then...

The constant cyclical interchange between his Eternal stratum and the light and heat caused his fleshly body to begin to emit rumbling sounds. A white light then exploded out from inside of him!

As soon as the light appeared, anyone who could see it gasped. Even the Chosen who felt so separated from him were instantly shocked.

"That white light... it's...."

"That's Immortal light!"

"That's a type of true Immortal light of Heaven and Earth that only appears right before the fleshly body reaches the true Immortal level!"

Fan Dong'er and all the other Chosen felt their minds reeling. The Elders of the Fang Clan, and other members of the clan who could see the light, were all trembling inwardly.

Fang Wei saw the light, and an expression of disbelief appeared on his face. Even his father and grandfather felt as if they were being struck by lightning, and gaped in shock.

Many people immediately flew out from within the ancestral mansion to look up into the sky. Their expressions were first that of astonishment, then disbelief, and finally, amazement!

"Immortal light..." The Grand Elder was struck speechless, something that rarely happened.

# Chapter 939: True Saint Fleshly Body

"I can't believe he's forming Immortal light!" In the stony cavern deep beneath the ancestral mansion, the withered old man in the crimson robe was watching with a gaze that blazed like fire.

"Could it be that someone from the Fang Clan... will finally be able to look down on the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea? After all these years, will there be another rarely seen... fleshly body true Saint!?"

Cultivators in the Immortal Realm who had true Immortal fleshly bodies were called Saints!

Saints are victorious, so the term itself implied that they were unrivaled in the Immortal Realm! If a true Immortal cultivation base was then added on top of that, then... that person would be a true Immortal and a true Saint at the same time. That was... a Paragon! 1

That was... an invincible Paragon of the Immortal Realm!

All of that would be preceded by light.

Immortal light!

Before the true Immortal fleshly body appeared, white light would shine out. Immortal qi would naturally exude from within that light, creating a unique color, which was none other than that unique Immortal light!

Only... when a true Saint fleshly body appeared, would it be possible... to see that light!

Within the light, Meng Hao trembled slightly. He could feel the dense Immortal qi in the light around him, a qi that did not come from the outside world, but rather, had grown inside his body.

It was as if it had been hidden in his blood vessels, concealed in his soul, obscured within his life force!

When the Immortal light appeared, it came with dense Immortal qi. Meng Hao's fleshly body began to emanate rumbling sounds as it rose madly toward the state of being a true Immortal fleshly body.

A flame burned deep inside of Meng Hao's eyes as an incredible power surged up within him. In that moment, he began to fly. He had long since stopped paying attention to the flow of time. From the moment he had flown out of the pavilion until now, more than half of the East Ascension Sun's 36 days had passed. By now, only 15 days remained. And yet, Meng Hao had not stopped moving.

318,000 meters. 324,000 meters....

330,000 meters!!

The light surrounding him grew stronger and more intense!

There was more Immortal qi, and the light and heat that existed in the blackness of space had turned into something like a cocoon, wrapping around Meng Hao, waiting... to be broken open to reveal new life!

The cocoon also nourished him, making Meng Hao's new life force grow even stronger!

His eyes glowed with an obsession to become more powerful. Therefore, he didn't stop, but instead, pushed onward. A soaring phoenix circled around him, which was the manifestation of the will of his soul. He roared like a Flying Rain-Dragon, which was caused by the will of the sovereign of the skies that nestled inside of him.

RUMBLE!

333,000 meters!

"Still not enough!" thought Meng Hao, squinting his eyes against the blinding light around him. By now, the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill inside of him had been thoroughly absorbed. At this height, even surrounded by Immortal light, his body was still burning up. It was something that was impossible for him to deal with; even his Eternal stratum couldn't keep him going. Unless he stopped, then when the cocoon around him broke, he would die.

"There's another way...." he thought, his eyes glittering. He suddenly extended his hand, causing a black flame to appear in his palm.

"I can concoct a Skypalace Sunspirit Pill right here and now! I don't have the medicinal plants, so I'll have to use the grand alchemic Dao of creating something from nothing!"

His eyes gleamed with determination as he suddenly stopped in place. Enduring the incredible scorching heat, he held out his hand, causing the flame to grow. At the same time, the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill formula suddenly appeared in his mind.

Creating something from nothing was using one's imagination to materialize a real medicinal pill. That pill could not be consumed by anyone else, nor could it be sensed by others. Only the person who concocted it would be able to see it and consume it.

"At this height of 333,000 meters, there is incredible light and heat. These are the optimal conditions for concocting a Skypalace Sunspirit Pill!" He closed his eyes and performed an incantation with his left hand, simultaneously imagining the medicinal ingredients he needed. Then he waved his hand, causing the light and heat to swirl around into the image of several medicinal plants, which he then grabbed with his right hand.

His right hand was like a grand furnace of Heaven and Earth, blazing hot and bright.

All of his energy was focused on the medicinal pill. He relied on the Immortal qi that swirled around him, on his mind, on his soul, on his will. He almost seemed to be having an out of body experience as he focused himself fully on creating something from nothing.

He could not fail, and he would only have one chance. He could stay here for a maximum of twelve 2-hour periods. If his pill concocting failed, he would have no other choice than to break out of the cocoon into his true Immortal fleshly body.

But that was an outcome he couldn't accept! He knew that if he could get even higher, his fleshly body breakthrough would be even more incredible.

This was a chance, a good fortune that he was willing to fight for!

At this height, his actions weren't visible to most of the people down below. However, everyone who could see clearly was now staring in shock, unclear as to what exactly he was doing.

Only the most powerful experts gradually began to put the pieces together and to speculate as to what was going on. Their speculations led to disbelief; it was a prospect that none of them dared to believe.

"He's actually...."

"Concocting pills!?"

"I don't see any medicinal plants, and yet he really is concocting pills!"

"I once heard Pill Elder talk about a legendary realm of the Dao of alchemy... they call it... creating something from nothing!"

The Fang Clan Elders' faces all flickered with shock.

The Grand Elder was panting as he looked high up into the sky. His expression was that of terror; Meng Hao had repeatedly and continuously shocked him with his actions and achievements.

Meanwhile, in the Dao of Alchemy Division, the dozen or so tier 8 alchemists suddenly stopped concocting pills and slowly looked up, as if they were reacting to the sensation of Meng Hao's alchemy. In the space of a few short breaths, their expressions completely and utterly changed.

"That aura...."

"That's...."

"Creating something from nothing!!"

Within the Dao of Alchemy Division's inner mountains, on the mountain filled with Unicorn Immortals, Pill Elder stood there, looking up into the sky. Slowly, a smile spread across his face, a smile that grew wider until he started laughing.

The Chosen from the various sects were flabbergasted. How could they have ever imagined that Meng Hao... was able to concoct pills himself. He was already at a terrifying height, surrounded by shocking heat and light, and yet he actually... was still able to concoct pills!

These Chosen had been groomed by their sects and clans for years, and had seen many things. Some of them suddenly thought of that legendary realm of pill concocting.

“How is this possible!?!?” thought Li Ling’er, gaping at Meng Hao with wide eyes. The only thing she could hear was her own heart pounding in her chest.

Fan Dong’er, Zhou Xin, Sun Hai, Taiyang Zi, all of them were gaping with wide eyes.

“Is there anything he can’t do?” thought Wang Mu, his heart filling with a sense of profound defeat.

Then there was Fang Wei, within whose expression could be seen a touch of blank confusion.

Time passed. Soon, the twelve 2-hour periods had passed. Meng Hao was trembling, and his body was withering. His energy was rapidly fading away.

He was now thoroughly immersed in pill concocting. Despite being in the middle of the rise of the East Ascension Sun, in which there were 36 straight days of noon, alchemists were naturally able to measure the passage of time through their body’s senses.

Most importantly, he was already incredibly familiar with the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill. He was able to adjust the pill formula based on his environment, so when the thirteenth 2-hour period arrived, scintillating light exploded out from the palm of his hand into the darkness that surrounded him.

The only thing that any observer could see was that resplendent light. However, what Meng Hao saw was a medicinal pill resting in the palm of his hand.

It was a Skypalace Sunspirit Pill created from nothing!

In these extreme conditions, he had used the technique of creating something from nothing to concoct a medicinal pill. The result was that he appeared to be on the verge of collapse. Although this was not his first

time creating something from nothing, it was the most exhausting .

In fact, he had the feeling that if he attempted to duplicate this attempt, he would fail.

The creation of the medicinal pill marked his absolute limit. He looked at the pill laying there on the palm of his hand, radiating light like some magnificent treasure of Heaven and Earth. Without the slightest bit of hesitation, he took the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill that no one else could see, and placed it into his mouth.

As soon as the medicinal pill entered his mouth, it exploded, transforming into a brilliant sun inside of him that generated boundless light and heat. It transformed into life force that in turn caused the Immortal light around him to become even more shocking.

“He... he succeeded!” One by one, the tier 8 alchemists in the Dao of Alchemy Division rose to their feet. Pill Elder’s laughter once again echoed out from the inner mountains.

In the ancestral mansion, the Grand Elder’s face was a mass of disbelief. The other Elders in the area were silent for a moment before their eyes also began to radiate a strange light.

There was little need to mention the other Chosen, who had long since been indescribably shaken by Meng Hao.

This time, Meng Hao... was rising to prominence under his own name! He was truly stepping into the cultivation world of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Bolstered by the power of the medicinal pill, Meng Hao looked up, and his eyes burned with decisiveness.

“True Immortal fleshly body!” he said. His body rumbled, and blinding light shot out of him as he climbed higher into the sky. Days passed as he went higher and higher and higher. 348,000 meters. 354,000 meters....

360,000 meters!!

369,000 meters. 378,000 meters.... 387,000 meters!!

When he reached that shocking height, the Immortal light around him exploded out in all directions, enveloping the entire area.

It was also in that moment that Meng Hao's fleshly body broke through the bottleneck. A distinct shattering sound could be heard that rapidly transformed into a boom like rolling thunder.

At the same time, he completely absorbed all of the Immortal qi and Immortal light, and his body suddenly surged with earth-shattering power.

The swirling Immortal qi transformed his body into something like a precious treasure. Every bit of his flesh and blood was like a true Immortal magical item. His bones became strong to an astonishing degree, and his qi passageways opened wide, allowing terrifying power to flow through them.

His hair grew long, and his body became slightly taller and more slender. His face was strikingly elegant, and his aura was enough to strike fear into the hearts of all Immortals. His entire body was like a precious gem that hovered there high in the sky, causing everyone who could see him to be completely shaken.

True Immortal fleshly body!

True Saint!

\*

1. There is a play on words here, as well as another thing I need to explain. First of all, the two words Saint 圣 and victorious 胜 are complete homophones, meaning they are pronounced exactly the same, shèng. Incidentally the latter is the same character as in the name of the planet, East Victory. Paragon can be translated in a variety of ways, and essentially refers to a supreme entity of some sort. We've already seen this term appear a few times in the story, and, as is explained here, is usually used to refer to someone of supreme and unrivaled power in their Realm.



# Chapter 940: The End of the Sky

A true Immortal fleshly body meant that he was a true Saint!

This in turn meant that Meng Hao's body was now powerful to a terrifying level. He had been baptized in Immortal light, which had then coalesced inside of him, creating.... an Immortal body!

Meng Hao clenched his fists. He could tell that if he ran into a so-called peak Immortal Realm cultivator, one punch would easily be able to rock such a person.

He could sense his might; it felt as if he had completely changed on a fundamental level. The terrifyingly powerful light and heat from before now seemed vastly weaker.

"This is the power of a true Immortal fleshly body...." He looked up higher into the sky, and his pupils glimmered with fire.

"Now it's time to find out... how high the Heavens really are!"

Rumbling could be heard as he climbed relentlessly up into the sky.

Even at this height of 387,000 meters, the light and heat were no longer something that Meng Hao felt incapable of enduring. He rose up from Planet East Victory in a piercing beam of light.

Meng Hao was now so far up that few down below could see him. The only thing most people could see was a long streak of prismatic light that seemed to be on the verge of rattling the Heavens and the starry sky, rising higher and higher.

Meng Hao was surrounded by flames as he soared higher at top speed. If you were close up, you wouldn't be able to see them, but from down on the ground, the clan members could see them clearly.

Meng Hao seemed to exist inside a scorching sea of flames, within which he could live eternally!

The Chosen up in midair were shaken; to them, Meng Hao seemed as if he were a mighty mountain. Subconsciously, they all simultaneously

reached a similar conclusion: perhaps they would always be behind Meng Hao in this lifetime.

Perhaps they would never have a chance to outdo him, never have a chance to catch up to him. Perhaps... they would only continue to fall further and further behind!

Of course, it was impossible for them to know that one of the past Sovereigns had already classified him as... 13th in the Echelon of the entire Nine Mountains and Seas!

Fan Dong'er watched in silence. Zhou Xin said nothing. Li Ling'er, Taiyang Zi, Song Luodan, Wang Mu, Sun Hai, and all the other Chosen from the sects and clans had complex expressions on their faces. They looked at Meng Hao getting even further away from them, a blazing sun wreathed in flames.

Fang Wei trembled, and slowly, he closed his eyes, making it impossible for anyone to see the gloominess and resignation therein.

Fang Wei's father and grandfather were on the verge of going mad. They looked at the blazing sun up in the sky, and unprecedented murderous rage welled up from the bottoms of their hearts.

The Grand Elder sat silently in the ancestral mansion, looking up into the sky. No one could tell what he was thinking, nor even guess what he might possibly be feeling.

"Fang Hao.... Fang Wei," he murmured.

Meng Hao continued on at top speed, like a Flame Phoenix, like a Flying Rain-Dragon. The Flying Rain-Dragon core inside of him was now rapidly dissolving, and bits of the legacy's knowledge appeared in his mind.

However, Meng Hao didn't pay any attention to that. The only thing he was thinking about was... finding out how high the Heavens were!

His expression was that of resolute will. Rumbling surrounded him as he flew another three thousand meters until he was 390,000 meters high. And yet, he did not stop.

The pressure was shocking, the transforming light and heat was petrifying. But Meng Hao did not decrease his speed at all, nor did he pause for even a moment. He was as unimpeded as his Dao heart, seemingly untouched by any impurity.

One day. Two days. Three days.... Time passed quickly, until only a few days of the East Ascension Sun remained.

Meng Hao proceeded onward, piercing through space, heading toward the only goal upon which he kept his eye; the sun which hung outside of the starry sky!

By now, he had far surpassed all of the other Chosen, all of the other members of his generation who had sought good fortune in this trial by fire. Now, the only person left for him to supersede... was himself.

He would surpass himself! He would pursue his dreams! It was like his Dao, a Dao that sought to cross numerous mountains, to pass over rivers and seas. It was a Dao of freedom and independence, unrestrained and unfettered, always moving toward glory.

Even the Heavens could not cover him up or cause his Dao heart to fall!

One day. Two days. Three days!

393,000 meters. 399,000 meters... 405,000 meters....

And he kept going!

The other Chosen up in the sky looked on, taciturn. They saw Meng Hao, and his obsessive progress, and the same thought floated up in all of their minds.

“In the end... how high will he get!?!?”

Li Ling’er was thinking this, as were Fan Dong’er, Taiyang Zi, and Song Luodan.

The various Elders were also watching closely.

“The boundary between the planet and the starry sky is vague, and can fluctuate due to various factors. In the moment when the sun is nearest, that boundary will become clearer.”

Days later, Meng Hao was still speeding along.

417,000 meters. 420,000 meters!

He felt like he was reaching the end. The light and heat around him had reached an indescribably high level. Despite the fact that his fleshly body was in the true Immortal Realm, he still felt as if he were about to be melted into a pool of blood, and then evaporate into a bloody mist.

He shook, and his Eternal stratum worked madly to restore him and support him, to allow him to go even higher.

"I can hold on a bit longer," he thought, his eyes narrowing as they focused ahead with firm determination.

RUMBLE!

426,000 meters!

432,000 meters!

438,000 meters!!

The sun appeared to be getting closer and closer. His eyes were crimson, and his entire body was shaking. He was now withering away, and yet... he kept flying!

The flames around him grew more boundless, and from a distance, it almost seemed as if the sky would catch fire. The flames spread out like wings that seemed to be flapping, preparing to attack the Heavens.

The lands quaked, and the hearts of all onlookers trembled.

At some point, the Grand Elder had emerged from within the ancestral mansion. He stood in the wide public square, looking up into the vast sky.

"Time is almost up...." he murmured softly.

Right now, all eyes were on Meng Hao. It wasn't just the Fang Clan. Shocked powerful experts from all corners of Planet East Victory had all long since turned their attention to the scene that was playing out.

"Who is that?!"

"That person flew out from the Fang Clan. Could it be... Fang Wei?!"

“Even Fang Wei couldn’t fly that high! This person is getting close to the boundary with the starry sky! Once he steps out there, he’ll die unless he’s in the Dao Realm!”

As the experts of Planet East Victory were shaken, there happened to be a huge island in a sea somewhere on the planet. As it floated there, an old man with the bearing of a transcendent being was gaping up at the sky in shock.

“Fudge! That little bastard... Dammit! Dammit! The Patriarch comes all the way here to hide and he... he actually found me!?!?”

The old man was in such a bad mood that he let out a series of howls that shook the entire island.

Standing next to the old man was a shockingly beautiful young woman. She smiled happily as she looked up into the sky.

Rumbling emanated out from Meng Hao as he gritted his teeth and sped higher. 444,000. 447,000!

Meng Hao’s expression twisted with madness. From the outside, it looked as if his body were literally burning up. His internal organs were scorched, and he was on the verge of being transformed into nothing more than ash.

And yet... he didn’t stop!

447,300 meters. 447,900 meters. 448,500 meters....

Meng Hao let out a bellow as the flames engulfing him grew even stronger, inundating him completely. He flew another 900 meters, reaching a height of 449,400 meters.

By now, the 36th day was almost over. Meng Hao only had about an hour left!

“I have to get past the 450,000 mark!” Meng Hao was filled with madness and determination. By now, the only thing about him that was visible was a vague, shadowy outline.

449,700 meters. 449,850 meters. 449,970 meters...

Time flowed by. The world was silent, and the lands were still. Everyone's attention was fixed on Meng Hao... as he arrived at a height of 449,990 meters!

He was now only 10 meters away from the 450,000 meter mark!!

Furthermore, there were only fifteen breaths of time until the rise of the East Ascension Sun ended!

Those final 10 meters seemed so close, and yet, they were the boundary between the planet and the starry sky!

How high were the Heavens of Planet East Victory? As of this moment... Meng Hao knew the answer. The Heavens... were 450,000 meters high!

He was now only 10 meters away from that height when he came to a stop, his body wreathed in flames, but his eyes shining with sharp light.

In addition to the enormous sun, he also saw a strange scene out in the starry sky. When he focused his eyes... he saw an enormous crimson Tribulation cloud. Shockingly, a gigantic yellow tree was just barely visible within that cloud.

The tree emanated an archaic aura, as if it had come into being along with Heaven and Earth, as if it had always existed within the Nine Mountains and Seas. It would not appear easily, and could only be seen under very special circumstances.

That was... something that would appear after acquiring a true Immortal fleshly body, and becoming a true Saint. It was... Saint Tribulation!

It was similar to the true Immortal Tribulation that came along with true Immortality!

Immortal Tribulation had a door, Saint Tribulation had a tree!

One movement would take Meng Hao out of the planet and into the starry sky.

One movement would cause the Saint Tribulation to descend!

Meng Hao stopped at that 10-meter mark and silently examined the distance.

In that moment, the Elders down below with profound cultivation bases looked on with incredible shock.

“Saint Tribulation!” thought the Grand Elder. His eyes closed, and his right hand clenched into a fist.

Meng Hao’s eyes shone with a threatening decisiveness, a decisiveness as sharp as a honed blade. Finally, he sighed.

“If I don’t go out into the starry sky and face the sun directly, then this whole trip will have been a waste.

“Time is almost up.... If my calculations are correct, I can endure... for ten breaths of time!” With that, he looked up, waiting for five breaths of time, and then moved forward one more time.

One movement, ten meters!

In the instant that Meng Hao moved forward, all of the observing cultivators on Planet East Victory were shocked, and cried out in surprise.

# Chapter 941: Ten Breaths of Time With the Sun!

That final movement took him ten meters... and now, there were only ten breaths of time until the rise of the East Ascension Sun was over.

That final movement put Meng Hao at a height of over 450,000 meters. He had now stepped... out of Planet East Victory and into... the starry sky!

In that instant, he felt an indescribable wave of light and heat bearing down on him. It seemed capable of melting him to nothing in an instant. At the same time, he also saw the yellow tree in the Tribulation Cloud suddenly begin to shoot toward him.

All of these things literally happened in the blink of an eye.

In the moment that he made that final move out into the starry sky, his Dharma Idol materialized behind him, and it wasn't 15,000 meters tall anymore, but rather 21,000 meters!

21,000 meters was comparable to a stage 7 Immortal, or an Immortal with 70 opened meridians. To most ordinary cultivators, a stage 7 Immortal would be considered the peak of the Immortal Realm.

The reason Meng Hao had a Dharma Idol 21,000 meters tall was not because he had seventy Immortal meridians. No, he still only had one. However, he was hovering on the verge of a breakthrough.

Now that he had a true Immortal fleshly body, his aura had been stimulated significantly, which caused the Immortal meridian to be further solidified.

However... even though it wasn't complete, it was enough that Meng Hao was now able to use the most powerful divine ability he had been enlightened regarding... the Paragon Bridge!!

He had begun to contemplate enlightenment of this divine ability in the Ruins of Immortality! The Paragon Bridge!

Many people had seen the manifestation of the divine ability, so if he

used it now, his identity as Fang Mu would be revealed. However, he had prepared beforehand, so when he unleashed the Paragon Bridge, it did not look like a bridge, but rather, a huge tree.

The huge, ancient tree that appeared around Meng Hao was in fact the Paragon Bridge. As it materialized, it exploded with a supreme level of energy.

That burst of energy dispelled the light and the heat, and then rumbled toward the Tribulation Cloud.

When it struck the cloud, Meng Hao's entire cultivation base surged, pouring all of its power into the tree-form Paragon Bridge as it went all-out in attack!

BOOOOMMM!

A huge explosion resulted when the two massive trees collided. The Tribulation Cloud's tree trembled and then... unexpectedly collapsed, layer after layer, eventually shattering into fragments.

Simultaneously, the Paragon Bridge shook, and then faded away. The Paragon Bridge was powerful, but Meng Hao's cultivation base currently wasn't powerful enough to be able to use it to full effect. However, by going all-out with every bit of power he could, even to the point of adding in the power of his life force and soul, he destroyed the Tribulation Cloud completely.

Meng Hao trembled and coughed up a mouthful of blood. It was a completely and utterly shocking event to witness.

Never before had anyone fought back against Immortal Tribulation by destroying it completely. Furthermore, the boundless power of the Paragon Bridge was incredibly domineering.

As the Tribulation Tree shattered, and the Tribulation Cloud dispersed, bursts of Immortal qi shot toward Meng Hao. They entered his body through his pores, filling him, transforming his body so that as of this moment, he truly and utterly possessed an Immortal body. He was now a true Saint!

Immortal qi poured into him with unbridled frenzy, giving him the qualification to be in the starry sky and look at the sun. Even though it was the barest of possible qualifications, snatching himself out of the mouth of death for a few brief moments, to Meng Hao... it was still enough!

Using the nourishment of the Immortal qi, he hovered there calmly in space, ignoring the Tribulation Cloud and its tree, resisting the heat and the light. All of what he had done... was for these ten breaths' worth of time.

He stared at the huge sun, bolstered by the Immortal qi and sustained by his true Immortal fleshly body. Even still, only someone in the Dao Realm could possibly stand up to the terrifying power of the sun. Therefore, he began to melt. After only three breaths of time, his legs were completely melted. After six breaths of time, his arms and body were gone. However, his eyes remained, staring fixedly at the sun.

Enlightenment flickered in his mind. Natural law, a Daoist magic, poured into his thoughts. He quickly absorbed it, and at the same time, completely maintained his composure. This was not a disregard toward death. No, Meng Hao knew... that he wouldn't die!

After seven breaths of time, his body was a blur. By eight breaths of time, only one eye remained unmelted. By nine breaths of time, his head had collapsed.

In the moment of death, he only had one eye left, which continued to stare fixedly at the sun. He was not the least bit alarmed. Everything that had occurred since he stepped out into the starry sky was exactly as he had anticipated ahead of time. Nothing unexpected had occurred.

At last, the final breath of time... arrived!

In the moment in which Meng Hao's consciousness was about to fade away, the huge sun began to fade. At the same time, Meng Hao could see a profound natural law. A huge shadow suddenly appeared in front of the sun, completely eclipsing it.

The shadow obscured the sun, causing everything in the starry sky to go

pitch black. The light and heat faded away without a trace.

The deadly, scorching heat that surrounded Meng Hao was gone. His Eternal stratum immediately began to restore him, and in the space of a few breaths, his body once again appeared in the starry sky.

He looked up, his expression the same as it had been the entire time, calm and unruffled. He looked out into the darkness of the starry sky, and, although he saw nothing, he could sense the sun's presence.

"The Ninth Mountain just eclipsed the sun...." he murmured. In his mind, he recalled the scene of the sun being covered up, and the natural law of the sun that he had been contemplating during those ten breaths of time.

Finally, he closed his eyes, gathered together the fragmented images of what had just occurred, and then settled himself cross-legged. In that same moment, numerous figures suddenly flew up from Planet East Victory. Fang Xi's father was among a group of over a hundred individuals, each and every one of whom was... a powerful expert from the direct bloodline.

Their expressions were that of excitement, and as they neared Meng Hao, they realized what he was doing, and they were shocked.

"He's contemplating enlightenment!"

"Only Dao Realm experts can face the sun in the starry sky, but this kid was able to do it, even with his cultivation base. It was only ten breaths worth of time, but to him, such good fortune is astonishing!"

"We can't let anyone disturb him." The direct bloodline Elders immediately took positions around Meng Hao to act as Dharma Protectors. Soon, other direct bloodline members approached in excitement and also took positions as Dharma Protectors.

Amidst rumbling, Planet East Victory resumed its previously-halted rotation. The light of the sun faded away, and night fell.

The rising of the East Ascension Sun was over, and the opportunity for good fortune had ended.

Fan Dong'er and the other Chosen left Planet East Victory with varied emotions. However, as they flew out toward the starry sky, each and every one took a long and hard look at Meng Hao.

Zhou Xin, Song Luodan, Wang Mu, Taiyang Zi, Sun Hai, Li Ling'er... all of them were the same.

As they passed by, they saw the direct bloodline members surrounding Meng Hao, and all of them murmured a sentence or two to themselves.

Zhou Xin looked at Meng Hao and quietly said, "I'm going to go back, head into secluded meditation, and not come out until I've reached true Immortality!"

"Unless something unexpected happens," Li Ling'er said, glaring angrily at Meng Hao, "I'll reach true Immortality within a hundred days!" With that, she turned and sped off in her flying shuttle.

"Fang Hao," Fan Dong'er said through grated teeth, "based on all of the preparations we've made, each and every one of us will directly rise to the peak of the Immortal Realm, and open 90 or more Immortal meridians...."

"I hope you keep working hard," Wang Mu said, clenching his fists at his side. "Otherwise... when you step into true Immortality, you'll leave me plenty of opportunity to exceed you!"

They left, and the focus of the Fang Clan became Fang Hao. To most people, he had now superseded Fang Wei... to become the number one Chosen of his generation.

Fang Wei remained silent as he returned to a location deep in the ancestral mansion with his father and grandfather. He refused to admit defeat, and went down to his subterranean chamber, where his eyes glinted with determination as he looked back at his father and grandfather.

"I'm going to cultivate... the One Breath Yellow Springs Incantation!" he declared.

When his father heard this, his expression flickered.

“Absolutely not!” his father replied angrily. “It’s one of the four great signature magics of the Fang Clan, but it’s not complete. It’s far, far more dangerous than the One Thought Reincarnation Incantation. You have the mark of the Sixth Patriarch on you, and will be in charge of the Fang Clan in the future. You can’t lose control of your Dao heart because of one measly defeat!”

“But it’s the Fang Clan’s most powerful Dao,” Fang Wei replied calmly. “With it, 98 Immortal meridians can be opened, which is four more than the One Thought Reincarnation Incantation. I think that will be very pleasing to the Sixth Patriarch!”

Fang Wei’s father was about to say something further when Fang Wei’s grandfather stopped him. He looked deeply at Fang Wei, and then said, “Have you thought this through clearly?”

“Very clearly,” Fang Wei replied softly, closing his eyes. “I shall cultivate the One Breath Yellow Springs Incantation. If I use this Dao to achieve Immortal Ascension, then within one hundred days, I’ll either fail and sink into the Yellow Springs, or succeed and open 98 Immortal meridians!

“Father, grandfather, if I fail, then return Fang Hao’s items to him.

“However, if I succeed, then it means he was doomed from birth to help me achieve my goals!” His eyes sparkled with a piercing light.

Fang Wei’s father did not respond. However, his eyes glittered as he nodded his head, then turned and left the hidden chamber.

Fang Wei’s grandfather held his tongue. Seeing Fang Wei’s determination, he sighed. At the same time, his heart surged with the desire to slay Meng Hao.

“It doesn’t matter whether Wei’er succeeds or not,” he thought. “Fang Hao... you won’t live past a hundred days!” Face dark, he turned and left.

Time passed. After the end of the Rise of the East Ascension Sun, all of the Chosen in all of the various clans and sects of the Ninth Mountain and Sea began to go into secluded meditation.

It was time for them... to break through to the true Immortal Realm!

# Chapter 942: Third Divine Ability!

Seven days later, Planet East Victory had returned to its usual state. The rising of the East Ascension Sun was now a thing of the past. However, because of the amazing display of the acquisition of good fortune, the name Fang Hao rose to new heights.

All of the Fang Clan was talking about Fang Hao, and the name also began to spread to the rest of Planet East Victory.

He had a 30,000-meter Bloodline Gatebeam!

He dominated the Medicine Pavilion all the way to the seventh level!

He concocted... one of the three sacred pills, the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill!

He had a true Immortal fleshly body!

He stepped out into the starry sky to face the sun!

Word spread of Meng Hao's various deeds, and the Fang Clan was completely shaken. Other cultivators on Planet East Victory now viewed Meng Hao as a blazing sun of the Fang Clan.

During that entire time, Meng Hao remained cross-legged in meditation up in the starry sky. Facing the sun had been a shocking type of good fortune for him, especially when he saw the Ninth Mountain eclipse it. That image thoroughly shook him inwardly.

He contemplated enlightenment for seven days, during which time his body shone with bright light. When the light spread out, shockingly, his Dharma Idol appeared behind him.

The Dharma Idol was 21,000 meters tall, and when the direct bloodline clan members saw it, they stared.

That was because almost as soon as it appeared, the Dharma Idol started to grow!!

At the same time, Meng Hao's Immortal meridian grew even more solid. Apparently, this period of enlightenment was pushing Meng Hao even closer to true Immortality.

Time passed, three more days. Meng Hao's entire body radiated brilliant light, and his Dharma Idol was no longer 21,000 meters tall, but rather 22,500 meters.

Such height was equivalent to an Immortal Realm cultivator with 75 opened meridians, and immediately lifted the spirits of the direct bloodline clan members.

Five more days passed. Meng Hao had now been contemplating enlightenment for half a month. At that point, more light exploded out from him, and his Dharma Idol grew from 22,500 meters to 24,000 meters!

A Dharma Idol like that could shake Heaven and Earth, and caused the direct bloodline clan members to stare in excitement.

Meng Hao was now equivalent to an Immortal Realm cultivator with eighty opened meridians. That was a level of the Immortal Realm achievable only by Inner Sect disciples of certain sects.

"He still hasn't even become a true Immortal, and he's already comparable to those Inner Sect disciples!"

"All of you, look closely.... Hao'er's Dharma Idol... has no Immortality Illumination Vine on it!!"

The direct bloodline clan members' hearts trembled as they peered at Meng Hao, and then voiced expressions of disbelief.

"He's not using an Immortality Illumination Vine. Could it be... could it be that he's walking his own path to true Immortality!?!?"

"Walking one's own path to Immortality is incredibly difficult! But look, his Dharma Idol is already 24,000 meters tall!!"

"The direct bloodline is destined to rise again!"

It was at this point that Meng Hao slowly regained his senses and opened his eyes. Within his mind flashed images of everything he had learned from the sun regarding natural law. In that moment, they suddenly fused together into a divine ability.

His enlightenment of the sun, and the sight of the Ninth Mountain eclipsing it, allowed him to create yet another divine ability, his third!

He slowly lifted his hand, within which appeared a spark of light. The light became a sphere, which then sucked in all the heat in the area, causing Meng Hao's appearance to ripple and distort.

Seeing that Meng Hao was awakening initially caused the direct bloodline members to get very excited. However, their faces quickly fell and they backed away.

They had just noticed that their entire bodies had become icy cold in a very short period of time, as if all the heat was being sucked out of them.

Even more shocking was that the entirety of Planet East Victory was apparently affected. Countless streams of heat rose up from the ground, from all living beings on the planet.

The amorphous heat caused everything to distort as it shot toward Meng Hao. His expression was calm as he observed the scene; from the look in his eyes, it seemed that he was still sunk in contemplation.

The sphere of light in his hand continued to suck in the heat, faster and faster. In the end, he raised his hand, and the sphere reached a size of thirty meters. Within the sphere circulated brilliant light that emitted a shocking aura.

The aura seemed to increase in strength as it absorbed heat until it even began to absorb light.

The sphere grew larger and its aura grew more intense. All of the light and heat around Meng Hao was being absorbed, leaving everything ice cold....

Down below on Planet East Victory, the effects were even more noticeable. Gradually, the temperature on the entire planet began to drop.

Not only that, everything started to get darker. Powerful experts all over Planet East Victory noticed, and instantly sent divine sense out to investigate the cause. Soon, they saw Meng Hao, and the enormous sphere of light above him, now several hundred meters wide.

It looked like a small sun, and anyone who saw it was left feeling shocked. The aura it contained was mad and brutal, and... truly made any onlookers feel as if they were looking at the sun!!

After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, Planet East Victory's temperature dropped further, and it got even darker. The globe of light was now over 3,000 meters wide, and caused anyone who looked at it to feel a sense of impending crisis.

If the energy inside the globe were to explode out, it would leave even experts of the Ancient Realm astonished and pale-faced.

Most shocking of all, it appeared that if Meng Hao were given enough time, the sphere would continue to grow without limit. This caused many powerful experts on Planet East Victory to be filled with a sensation of vigilance. There were even streams of divine sense that converged on the Fang Clan ancestral mansion.

The direct bloodline clan members in Meng Hao's vicinity immediately began to urgently transmit messages with divine will.

"Meng Hao!!"

"Hao'er, wake up!!"

Meng Hao trembled as the surrounding clan members called out. His eyes gradually began to grow clear and bright as he regained his senses. At first he looked confused, but then he raised his head up to look at the 3,000-meter sphere of light up above.

"Meng Hao, cease that magical technique!" barked Fang Xi's father.

A sense of crisis gradually rose up in Meng Hao from the streams of divine sense, and also from the fact that he realized that he was about to lose full control the globe of light.

Eyes flickering with concentration, he let out a growl and lifted both hands up above his head. Using all the power he could muster, he exercised control of the last strand that connected him to the sphere to reverse its suction.

The sphere gradually stopped absorbing light and heat, and then started to shrink. After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, the sphere began to fade away. Sweat poured down Meng Hao's forehead.

He utilized all of the energy in his body, and knew that even the slightest lapse in concentration would result in the sphere exploding.

After it finally disappeared, the direct bloodline descendants approached him. Smiles could be seen on their excited faces.

Meng Hao looked back at his 24,000-meter Dharma Idol, and sensed the Immortal meridian within him, and knew that it would be complete with only a tiny bit of effort.

"Soon, the day will arrive in which my cultivation base will move into the Immortal Realm!" Meng Hao's eyes shone with determination.

"Hao'er," said one of the direct bloodline Elders, smiling, "what magical technique was that?"

"It's a divine ability I created after being enlightened regarding the sun...." said Meng Hao, turning to clasp hands to the Elder. He had now created three divine abilities. One was A Writ of Karma, the other was the Paragon Bridge, and the third... was this sphere of light.

"I'll call it... Supernova Magic!" he said, his eyes shining brightly.

"Supernova Magic.... Hao'er, this divine ability of yours... is powerful! It's able to absorb a virtually limitless amount of heat and light and create a copy of the sun, and depending on how much it absorbed, the force of its explosion would be inestimable." The Elder gazed deeply at Meng Hao. "However, it has a fatal flaw. It would be easy to interrupt you while you use it. Furthermore, it takes too long to prepare. It only reached 3,000 meters in the time it takes an incense stick to burn. To reach 30,000... would take several hours.

"In addition, I could tell that you were not in complete control of it. If it had grown any larger, you would likely have lost control completely.

"You need to analyze this magic thoroughly before you use it again." It only took a few sentences for the old man to analyze the magic's strengths

and weaknesses.

Meng Hao nodded, then clasped hands and bowed deeply to all of the direct bloodline clan members who had stood as Dharma Protectors for him. He felt very grateful toward them, and the sensation of being their blood relative grew even stronger.

Soon, the group of them turned into prismatic beams of light that shot back toward the surface of Planet East Victory. As they neared, Meng Hao saw numerous clan members flying out of the ancestral mansion, their faces filled with respect.

“Greetings, Prince Hao!”

This term of address caused Meng Hao to stare in shock. After blinking a few times, a warm smile appeared on his face, and he offered formal greetings to all the direct bloodline clan members. Then he made to return to his Immortal’s cave.

It was in that moment of departure that the Elder who had pointed out the flaws in his divine ability moments ago transmitted a message with divine will.

“Be careful of Fang Xiushan!”

Meng Hao’s expression was the same as ever. He knew that Fang Xiushan was Fang Wei’s father, so he nodded in response and then left.

After returning to his residence, he sat down cross-legged to meditate. After some probing, he came to the conclusion that his Immortal meridian was now more than 99% complete.

“Just a bit more,” he thought. “In less than a hundred days, it will be perfectly complete, and then....” His eyes glittered with cold light. “I will become a true Immortal!”

“As far as my Supernova Magic is concerned, it has some flaws. However, once my cultivation base gets high enough, I can fix them, and then I’ll have another trump card to use in battle!” He lifted his hand, and a sphere of light appeared in his palm. As it grew larger, the Fang Clan suddenly got colder. Meng Hao did nothing at first, allowing it to grow

larger for a certain period of time. Then he cut off the absorbing power.

"I gained a lot during this rising of the East Ascension Sun. My Dharma Idol grew to 24,000 meters, and I gained enlightenment of the sun. Plus, my fleshly body... finally had a breakthrough and reached true Immortality!"

"I wonder how strong I'll be when my cultivation base has the same breakthrough!?" Meng Hao's expression flickered with anticipation.

# Chapter 943: Killing Intent Approaches!

Several days later, Meng Hao emerged within the clan. All the clan members who he ran into looked at him with extreme respect, and the fervor with which people had previously treated Fang Wei was now shown toward Meng Hao.

As for Fang Wei, he had apparently disappeared, and was nowhere to be found.

Fang Xi made some inquiries, and finally got a smattering of information that he immediately passed on to Meng Hao. When Meng Hao heard that Fang Wei was in secluded meditation in an attempt to break through to true Immortality, his eyes flickered coldly.

"A Writ of Karma will lock down the Nirvana Fruits inside of him that belong to me. My good fortune with the sun was a huge blow to his self-confidence, and surely cracked his Dao heart. And yet, he stood up tall after all of that." He thought about their interchange high up in the sky for a moment, and sighed.

Meng Hao was displeased with Fang Wei, but all told, he was not guilty of any terrible crimes. In fact, Meng Hao knew that if he looked at things from Fang Wei's perspective, Fang Wei hadn't done anything wrong.

"The ones who are wrong...are certain other people in this clan," he mused. As he thought back to everything that had happened since he had returned to the clan, he was struck with the increasing sensation that there was some vast conspiracy afoot.

It was a mystery involving Fang Wei, and also had something to do with the Grand Elder. Perhaps... even a Patriarch.

That was why the Grand Elder had been acting so strange. That was why everyone maintained silence regarding Fang Wei. Apparently, a Patriarch had appointed Fang Wei to a position of authority years ago, although Meng Hao wasn't completely sure of the truth behind it all.

It was as if the entire matter was taboo. No one dared to speak of it.

“Do you understand...?” That was what Pill Elder had said to him on the mountain peak. 1

“Was he warning me that there was something wrong with the Nirvana Fruits the Grand Elder gave me? Or was he hinting at something else...?” Meng Hao frowned. After considering that matter for a bit longer, he began to duplicate some Spirit Extract, which he placed onto the Nirvana Fruit.

Meng Hao had already decided that once he fully restored the Nirvana Fruit, he would definitely absorb it. He had the feeling that the benefits it would provide him would be immense, and would help him begin to unravel the enigma of the Fang Clan.

That feeling stemmed from his confidence in his ability to analyze and judge matters, as well as his keen intuition.

“Nobody has ever been able to absorb the first generation Patriarch’s Nirvana Fruits. I wonder what miracles will result if I succeed?” After a while, he stopped considering the matter, and calmed his mind.

Seven days later, Meng Hao looked worriedly at the copper mirror, which had rapidly consumed all of his hard-earned spirit stones in exchange for batch after batch of Spirit Extract. That Spirit Extract had then been greedily absorbed by the Nirvana Fruit.

As he nourished the Nirvana Fruit with the Spirit Extract, it seemed to be gradually awakening, as if... it were almost completely restored.

As the copper mirror consumed all of the spirit stones he had acquired from concocting the Skypalace Sunspirit Pill, as well as what he had gotten from Sun Hai, stabs of pain filled Meng Hao’s heart. It was as if he had just thrown away a vast sum of spirit stones directly into the Nirvana Fruit.

Each one of those spirit stones was enough to break Meng Hao’s heart.

“Making money is so hard, so how come spending it... is so easy?” he thought with a sigh.

Even the entire Fang Clan would be incapable of producing so much

Spirit Extract. After all, the medicinal plants he had used to make it were the ones he had acquired in the Ruins of Immortality, plants which were rare and, in fact, virtually extinct in the outside world.

As such, this Spirit Extract was essentially priceless. Not even the Fang Clan as a whole would be able to afford to restore this Nirvana Fruit; only Meng Hao, with his copper mirror, could manage it.

"Dammit!" he thought, gritting his teeth and then letting out a long sigh. "I need to think of yet another plan to make some more spirit stones...." He sat there with furrowed brow for a long time before finally clenching his jaw.

"Those sacred pills are not easy to concoct. They will be my last resort. I still haven't finished the seventh level of the Medicine Pavilion. I should take advantage of the fact that I'm so famous in the Fang Clan right now. Maybe I can strike it rich in one fell swoop!" Having made up his mind, he called Fang Xi over and the two of them spent some time discussing the matter. Finally, Fang Xi left in excitement to enact the plan.

It only took a few days for word to spread through the clan like stormwinds.

"Did you hear? Tomorrow, Prince Hao is going to the Dao of Alchemy Division to challenge the Medicine Pavilion!"

"Last time he went to the Medicine pavilion, he completed every level perfectly! It caused a huge sensation in the Dao of Alchemy Division."

"From ancient times until now, it's been easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to find someone who can make it through the ninth level of the Dao of Alchemy's Medicine Pavilion. Each and every one is a Grandmaster of the Dao of Alchemy. I heard that Prince Hao's goal is just that: to make it through the ninth level!"

News about Meng Hao challenging the Medicine Pavilion quickly spread through the clan, and especially through the Dao of Alchemy Division. In the end, it was like great waves rolling across the entire clan.

Meng Hao was very pleased with this sort of clan environment, and had

things all worked out with Fang Xi. Fang Xi would wait outside the Medicine Pavilion area to collect spirit stones. Anyone who didn't pay spirit stones would not be allowed to observe.

Before, it would have been difficult for Meng Hao to pull something like that off. However, after the rising of the East Ascension Sun, he was the number one Chosen in the Fang Clan, and his every word and deed was the subject of widespread attention.

"This time, I'm definitely going to make a killing!" he thought. The next morning at dawn, he woke early and pushed open the door of his residence. Just when he was about to fly into the air toward the Dao of Alchemy Division, he saw six beams of light flying toward him at high speed. They quickly arrived and surrounded him.

These six people surged with energy. Five of them were stage 7 Immortals, and Meng Hao could sense that the remaining one had a cultivation base as profound as a deep sea. He was a middle-aged man with a grim face who looked Meng Hao over and then said, "The Grand Elder has summoned you, Fang Hao. Come with us."

Meng Hao frowned at the six men and then coolly replied, "Understood. I'll go over a bit later."

With that he strode forward and prepared to fly past the men.

When the middle-aged man heard Meng Hao's response, his face tightened with displeasure.

"The Grand Elder has summoned you, and you dare to cause a delay? You're coming with us now, or else—"

"Or else what?" said Meng Hao, stopping in place and looking at the man with an enigmatic smile. A vast coldness swirled deep within his pupils.

"Arrest him!" said the man, staring back at Meng Hao.

Immediately, the other five stage 7 Immortals transformed into beams of light, and their cultivation bases surged. Dharma Idols appeared, 21,000-meter illusory giants. Of course, none of these Dharma Idols represented

the cultivators themselves; all of them were false Immortals!

They closed in on Meng Hao in the blink of an eye. One of the Dharma Idols was an enormous war drum, which emanated a rumbling like that of thunder. Two of the other Dharma Idols were vicious black dragons, which roared as they slashed through the air toward Meng Hao.

Of the final two Dharma Idols, one was a three-headed six-armed statue, and the other was an enormous crimson python with a forked tongue and sinister eyes.

The five men all attacked simultaneously, and it didn't look like they were trying to arrest Meng Hao. Instead, killing intent flickered in their eyes, although it was faint and well-concealed. However, Meng Hao had experienced many things during his life, including two intense wars on Planet South Heaven. He had also slaughtered countless people, so killing intent like this was something he was keenly attuned to.

"Wanna kill me?" he asked with an icy cold smile. He took a step forward and clenched his right hand into a fist. It shot toward the crimson python at high speed, creating a sonic boom that echoed out in all directions. The air distorted as the power of Meng Hao's true Immortal fleshly body exploded out.

As the boom rang through the air, the crimson python shattered, revealing the cultivator behind it, ashen face awash with shock. Before he could retreat, Meng Hao leaped forward and kicked him viciously with his right foot. Cracking sounds could be heard as it slammed into the man's chest, and blood sprayed from his mouth. He tumbled backward.

At the same time, the other four cultivators closed in, divine abilities and magical techniques raging. Meng Hao's face flickered with iciness. Instead of dodging to the side, he turned and transformed into a golden roc, then shot directly toward his four opponents with incredible speed. A wave of a hand caused numerous mountains to appear, which formed a mountain chain that dropped down toward them.

Next, he made a grasping motion, and a long spear appeared in his hand, the haft carved from the World Tree and the spearhead made from white

bone. When he stabbed forward with it, everything darkened, and a sobbing sound rang out. The war drum collapsed into pieces, and the cultivator within it coughed up blood and fell into retreat.

Simultaneously, the head of a Blood Demon appeared, and a blood-colored halo materialized beneath Meng Hao's feet. He punched again, and the three-headed, six-armed statue exploded. At the same time, the two black dragon Dharma Idols managed to land attacks on Meng Hao's chest.

The two cultivators controlling the black dragons glared with killing intent. Their cultivation bases exploded with power that would be enough to fell virtually any other cultivator who was weaker than a stage 7 Immortal.

A boom could be heard, and suddenly everything went silent. The two cultivators who had just successfully landed attacks on Meng Hao stared in shock, and then gasped. It wasn't that they weren't aware that Meng Hao had a true Immortal fleshly body. However... in their minds, his cultivation base was not at the true Immortal stage, so therefore, they didn't believe his true Immortal fleshly body would really be all that powerful.

As of this moment, though... they had a clear idea... of what exactly a true Immortal fleshly body was!

"So weak!" Meng Hao said casually. He glared at the men aggressively, and it was like piercing light stabbing into their eyes.

Meng Hao hadn't even budged an inch. In fact, he didn't even appear to be harmed at all. At the same time, the two men who had just attacked him felt a powerful counterattack surging toward them, and suddenly, blood oozed out of their mouths.

The two men were scared witless, and were about to retreat when Meng Hao reached out and grabbed one of them, then lifted him into the air and shook him back and forth. The man couldn't control his own body, and felt massive power battering him. Cracking sounds could be heard as his bones were broken and dislocated, and he was then thrown violently

toward the second retreating man.

A boom rang out as the second man was sent tumbling backward, his bones shattered and blood spraying from his mouth.

All of this took place in only a few breaths' worth of time. Five stage 7 Immortals were seriously injured, and Meng Hao remained standing there. He then turned toward the first middle-aged man, the one with the unfathomable cultivation base.

The man's eyes widened. He had never imagined that a true Immortal fleshly body would be so shockingly powerful. It was an exceedingly rare thing for a cultivator to have a fleshly body developed to this level, and was in fact something he had never seen before.

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1. Pill Elder talked to Meng Hao in chapter 926.

# Chapter 944: The Grand Elder's Stance

As the two of them faced off, Meng Hao's Dharma Idol appeared, 24,000 meters tall. Combined with his true Saint fleshly body, it caused his energy to surge with intense power that only continued to increase. He then extended his right hand, and a glowing sphere materialized above it. As it floated there, the sphere seemed to suck in all of the warmth in the area and cause everything to instantly grow cold.

The man's expression was solemn, and his eyes focused intently on Meng Hao. He sensed a feeling of grave danger when he looked at the sphere of light. And then, Meng Hao started to walk toward him. It was at this moment that...

"Hao'er, come to the main temple!" The Grand Elder's archaic voice echoed out around them.

Meng Hao said nothing, but his eyes flashed almost indiscernibly. As for the middle-aged man, when he heard the Grand Elder's voice, he gave an inward sigh of relief.

At the same time, his eyes emanated a sharp glow, and a murderous will gradually rose up in his heart. That was because he had realized that Meng Hao's Dharma Idol was still standing there, and Meng Hao's powerful energy hadn't faded away. It was almost as if he was preparing to refuse the Grand Elder's summons.

The man's eyes glittered as he readied himself. He looked at Meng Hao.

Ten breaths of time passed, during which Meng Hao's expression never changed. Finally, his Dharma Idol vanished, and his surging energy dissipated. Everything returned to normal. However, the glowing sphere remained floating there. As he began to walk forward, it drifted up toward the top of his head, sucking in all of the heat and light around it.

Meng Hao put the bone-tip spear away, and then completely ignored the middle-aged man as he flew into the air toward the ancestral mansion's main temple.

Inwardly, the middle-aged man sighed in regret, and then reined in the killing intent in his gaze. Finally, he followed Meng Hao. As for the other five men, they had not received fatal injuries, but were still very seriously hurt. They wouldn't be able to fully recover any time soon, so for the moment, all they could do was struggle to their feet and then consume some medicinal pills. After that, they followed along, faces pale.

Meng Hao flew the entire way, followed by the six men. Quite a few clan members saw him. Many of them had originally intended to go observe his efforts in the Dao of Alchemy Division, and were taken aback when they saw him flying toward the main temple.

This was especially the case when they saw the six men following him, five of whom were seriously injured and had dismal, ashen faces. The clan members who saw this were all shaken inwardly.

From the look of things, a violent storm was brewing under the surface of the Fang Clan, and was just barely being kept under control.

At some point, the sky above the Fang Clan had changed from its usual bright, sunny, and endlessly blue appearance. Now, black clouds gathered, and the rumbling of thunder shook the ground. Flashes that resembled silver dragons could occasionally be seen flickering in the clouds.

When the Fang Clan members saw this, they grew very quiet. They weren't sure exactly what had happened, but they could clearly sense that the air was growing increasingly colder.

Meng Hao's expression was calm as he proceeded forward. The sphere of light above his head continued to grow larger. Soon it was 300 meters wide, and incredibly shocking in appearance....

The six Fang Clan guardsmen behind him looked on with tingling scalps, completely astonished. No one else understood why the sky had changed color and the air was growing cold, but they knew. It was all caused by the glowing sphere of light above Meng Hao's head!

As Meng Hao headed toward the main temple, the sphere of light continued to absorb all the heat and light around him!

“This is the divine ability he created when he faced the sun!” thought the leader of the group of six men. His eyes widened, and despite the level of his cultivation base, he still felt fear growing inside of him.

It didn’t take long before the sphere of light was 600 meters wide. Meng Hao was now outside of the main temple. The first thing he noticed was the Grand Elder, sitting there inside.

There were also numerous Elders sitting in the enormous seats that filled the temple hall. Each one of them wore calm expressions, and none of them spoke, which actually caused the temple hall to be filled with enormous pressure.

Sitting near the Grand Elder were Fang Wei’s grandfather and father. Both of them looked over icily at Meng Hao.

Killing intent flickered deep within Fang Xiushan’s eyes.

Meng Hao’s expression was as calm as ever. Without any hesitation, he stepped into the middle of the temple hall.

As for the 600-meter sphere of light, Meng Hao left it floating just outside of the temple, where it continued to absorb light and heat.

Because of the sphere, Meng Hao’s entrance into the temple hall was accompanied by icy coldness. The light even began to fade, and frost began to appear on the ground.

The surrounding Elders’ facial expressions did not change, but they had long since sent their divine sense out to inspect the sphere of light hovering outside the temple.

“Fang Hao extends greetings to the Grand Elder and other Elders,” he said, his voice neither haughty nor humble as he clasped hands and bowed deeply. He was clearly following the clan rules down to the letter.

The Grand Elder’s face was expressionless as he looked at Meng Hao.

“Hao’er,” he said slowly, “you displayed shocking talent during the rise of the East Ascension Sun. You flew up higher than any member of the Junior generation of the clan has ever flown throughout our countless

years of history.

"You stepped off of the planet and into the starry sky, you faced the sun for ten breaths of time, and you received significant good fortune and enlightenment.

"All of these things make me very happy for you." Although he spoke words of praise and encouragement, his expression was completely emotionless the entire time.

Meng Hao stood there silently and scanned the crowd. He remembered the words of that direct bloodline Elder who had warned him about Fang Xiushan. Half a month had already passed since then, and from what Meng Hao could tell, this summons could not be a good thing for him.

That was especially true when he noticed the anxiety within the eyes of the direct bloodline Elders who were present in the temple. Furthermore, Fang Xi's father was present, and was looking nervously at Meng Hao.

"The Elders have all proposed that you be rewarded for your actions," the Grand Elder continued, "and after much thought, I have come to the conclusion that I agree. Your reward will come in the form of access to the clan's ancestral land, which was created by the first generation Patriarch. At one time, our ancestral land was part of the Ruins of Immortality. However, the Patriarch cut that part of the Ruins away and brought it here."

When Meng Hao heard this, his eyes narrowed. He knew that the Fang Clan possessed deep resources, but he hadn't been aware that the first generation Patriarch was so strong that he could take away part of the Ruins of Immortality and bring it back to the clan to serve as an ancestral land!

"The divine abilities and magical techniques of the Fang Clan were not all simply handed down by the first generation Patriarch," the Grand Elder explained. "Instead, for generation after generation, members of our clan have entered the ancestral land he left behind. After thoroughly searching it over and over again, the various magics of the Fang Clan have slowly been collected together.

“However... there are still many magical techniques that have yet to be discovered. To find them is a matter of chance and good fortune.

“Furthermore, for countless years, any Fang Clan member who reached the Dao Realm and did not perish off planet, chose to be buried in this ancestral land when it came time for them to return to the dust. There, they would leave behind their cultivation magic and other secrets, where they remain, just waiting for a predestined successor to go in and acquire them.

“As for the first generation Patriarch’s five great Daoist magics, four of them have been located. However, the most powerful of them all, the One Thought Stellar Transformation, has never been found. 1

“In addition to all that, there are also medicinal plants and pill formulas in the ancestral land. There are even Immortal Ancient Daoist Treasures, all just waiting for their destined person to come along and take them.” As the Grand Elder spoke, his cold voice echoed throughout the temple hall.

Meng Hao listened to everything, his face as still as stone.

“Opening the ancestral land requires a significant expenditure of resources. Generally speaking, we only open it once every thousand years. However, even though the appointed time has not arrived, we are going to make an exception and open it for you.

“However....” It was at this point that the Grand Elder suddenly paused and looked deeply at Meng Hao for a long moment before continuing.

“Great danger lurks inside. That danger exists in the form of trials by fire left behind by the first generation Patriarch for his successors. The ancestral land is a bizarre place, in which various strange beings can arise.

“Therefore, to someone like you, the ancestral land might be a place of good fortune, but it can also be extremely dangerous. Although not many people have actually died in the ancestral land over the years, some have.

“You may consider... whether or not you wish to take advantage of this reward.” The Grand Elder’s final words caused Fang Xiushan’s and Fang Wei’s grandfather’s expressions to flicker almost imperceptibly. Without

even thinking about it, they glanced over at the Grand Elder.

Fang Xiushan's brow furrowed. According to their previous agreement with the Grand Elder, when the ancestral land was opened, Meng Hao would be forced to enter it whether he wanted to or not. He was not to be given a choice in the matter.

As of this moment, both Fang Xiushan and Fang Wei's Grandfather couldn't understand why the Grand Elder, who had always supported their bloodline, would, at the very last moment, suddenly give Meng Hao the option of whether or not to enter!

As the two of them hesitated, the Grand Elder waved his finger, causing a vortex to appear in midair in the middle of the temple. The vortex spun out, growing to dozens of meters in size. It was filled with swirling mists, within which slowly appeared the image of another world.

Gradually, that world grew clearer and clearer.

Meng Hao's face was calm as he looked at the Grand Elder. The fact that he had been given a choice was somewhat strange. After a moment of thought, he glanced over at the direct bloodline Elders, and could see that they were also hesitating. He was now being given an opportunity that he would be hard-pressed to come across in any other situation.

At the same time, he was facing imminent danger.

"Hao'er," said Fang Xi's father, 19th Uncle, "you really need to consider the matter carefully. I suggest that you don't enter the ancestral land. Wait until you're in the Immortal Realm. In another few hundred years, then you can go into the ancestral land. That would be much better. There's really no reason for you to enter now. Hao'er, consider things carefully."

Meng Hao was silent for a moment before turning back to the Grand Elder, clasping hands and bowing deeply.

"Grand Elder, am I the only one who can enter on this occasion? May I choose to decline the chance to enter?"

"If you enter, you will do so alone," the Grand Elder said slowly, his expression one of neither joy nor anger. "If you wish to decline the chance

to enter, you may go to the Dao of Alchemy Division to challenge the medicine pavilion.”

Off to the side, Fang Xiushan sat there nervously. He had paid a very heavy price to arrange this matter, and if Meng Hao didn’t enter, it would be impossible for him to have Meng Hao killed.

“Bear in mind,” continued the Grand Elder, looking at Meng Hao with a piercing gaze, “all contact with the outside will be severed once you enter the ancestral land. Nothing that happens inside will be visible to any of us.”

Those words caused Fang Xiushan’s face to twitch. He looked over at his father, and saw that, although his face was expressionless, his pupils had constricted.

Meng Hao was unsure as to why the Grand Elder was taking this stance. The normal thing to happen would be for the Grand Elder to give him no choice in the matter. For things to turn out this way caused Meng Hao to look over at the vortex thoughtfully. He was just about to say that he would decline what was obviously an ambush set up by Fang Xiushan when suddenly, a tremor ran through his body. As he looked into the world inside of the vortex, his eyes suddenly went wide.

For a moment, it seemed as if he had caught sight of something completely unbelievable. However, his expression quickly returned to normal. Nonetheless, inwardly, he was more shocked than if he had been struck by lightning. His heart began to pound beyond control.

Mouth and throat dry, he immediately said, “I choose to enter the ancestral land!”

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1. Yes, the final characters of the name of this magic are the same characters as the novel Stellar Transformations by I Eat Tomatoes.

# Chapter 945: Meng Hao's Tears

When the Elders in the temple who tended to support Fang Wei's bloodline heard Meng Hao's words, they looked over at him expressionlessly. As for the direct bloodline, anxious expressions could be seen on their faces. However, since this was Meng Hao's decision, they did nothing to persuade him to change his mind.

After all, the Grand Elder had clearly explained that there would be great danger in the ancestral land. Considering that Meng Hao had chosen to enter even under such circumstances caused 19th Uncle and the direct bloodline Elders to be able to sense his level of determination.

All they could do was sigh inwardly.

The Grand Elder looked deeply at Meng Hao for a moment, his expression revealing nothing about what he was thinking. However, the way he was looking at Meng Hao did seem... somewhat strange.

Most excited of all was Fang Xiushan. He took a deep breath and stared at Meng Hao without revealing any of the boiling killing intent in his heart. Fang Wei's grandfather frowned thoughtfully at the way the Grand Elder was looking at Meng Hao. For some reason, he had a very uneasy feeling inside.

The Grand Elder was silent for a moment, then coolly said, "Since that is your decision, then go now."

He waved his hand, and a gentle breeze rose up, wrapped around Meng Hao, and sent him toward the vortex.

"In two months, the ancestral land will automatically open again, and you may come out. During those two months... please take care of yourself." Even as the words rang out, Meng Hao flew through the air in the wind. In the blink of an eye, he was right outside of the vortex. When he looked inside, his heart pounded madly, and a feeling of reminiscence floated in his heart.

RUMBLE!

Upon contact, he sank into the vortex as if it were water. Then he vanished. The vortex stopped moving, and then faded away from the temple hall.

In that same moment, there were nine areas in different parts of Planet East Victory which suddenly shone with mysterious black light. That light was cast up by teleportation portals, within which sat nine cold and expressionless cultivators wearing black robes.

These nine cultivators seethed with murderous auras, as if innumerable foes had been slain by their hands.

If Meng Hao were able to see any of them, he would recognize them immediately. The black robes worn by these nine men seemed to be exactly the same as the ones worn by the people who had ambushed him and 19th Uncle en route to Planet East Victory!

As they sat there cross-legged in the teleportation portals, light suddenly rose up around them, and they vanished. This was in the exact moment in which Meng Hao vanished into the ancestral land.

Another thing happened at exactly the same time. Deep underground beneath the Fang Clan ancestral mansion, seven withered figures sat cross-legged in meditation. One of them was the crimson-robed old man who had opened his eyes during the rising of the East Ascension Sun, aroused by Meng Hao's Essence of Divine Flame. At this moment, his eyes opened, and they shone with boundless ancientness.

"This kid's bloodline is strong.... He's a descendant of Eldest Brother. He must be THE Chosen of this generation of the clan." The old man's eyes flickered as he sensed the black-robed men vanishing, and then a cold light gleamed therein.

"Interesting. Someone actually dares to violate clan rules and fight inside the clan.... Not only that, but they chose to fight within the ancestral land!" The coldness in his eyes grew more intense.

"Is it Sixth Brother's bloodline....?" The old man's brow furrowed in thought for a while. He turned his head to look at the sixth figure sitting there meditating in the inky blackness of the stony cavern.

There were a total of seven people inside this underground lair. Originally, the old man in the crimson robe should have been asleep, and should not have awakened in this age. According to the clan rules, it was the Sixth Patriarch who was supposed to regain consciousness in this millennium.

However, Meng Hao's Essence of Divine Flame had stimulated his aura during the rise of the Eastern Ascension Sun, reviving him. Afterward, he had planned to return to meditation, but had then changed his mind.

"Sixth Brother is in an astral projection. His soul is no longer in his body." He thought for another moment.

"Sixth Brother has already cultivated the Reincarnation Incantation Daoist magic to the pinnacle. But... was it worth it?" The old man closed his eyes. This closing of the eyes was not a return to a state of inactivity. Instead, he quietly sent out some divine sense, which transformed into a stream of divine will that made its way through the earth... toward the ancestral land!

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Heaven and Earth trembled as lightning and thunder danced about in the clouds, as if seeking a way to lash the earth. The ground itself was a brownish color that made it look like it was soaked with blood, and stretched out as far as the eye could see.

What parts of the land were not covered with deep cracks were choked with weeds.

A seemingly eternal air of desolation and bleakness spread out in all directions. Off in the distance, ruins could be seen, and even further off, a volcano which belched thick black smoke.

Occasionally, frightening roars could be heard echoing about, which raged across the lands like storm winds, causing everything to shake.

The mystery of this place came from the fact that it used to be part of the Ruins of Immortality. Its solemn dignity came because it was now an ancestral land of the Fang Clan.

The first generation Patriarch was buried here. Other Dao Realm Patriarchs of the clan, his descendants, were also laid to rest here after passing away in meditation.

The entire ancestral land was laid out in the shape of a straight line. The further one went in, the more danger there was. As for the brown-earthed region near the entrance, two chains of mountains were visible.

These two mountain ranges were like two stone dragons, lofty, imposing, and jagged.

Between the two mountain chains was a path, so far down from the peaks of the mountains that the sky was almost like a sliver up above. It was like a great door leading into the ancestral land, although there was no actual door present, only... an enormous statue larger than the mountains themselves!

This statue looked as if it were inseparably connected to the mountains. It was pitch black, and wore a heavy suit of armor. Its two hands rested on the pommel of a greatsword, and the statue itself seemed incomparably ancient.

The sword was dozens of meters wide, and was thrust down into the earth. Ancient magical symbols were engraved onto its surface, which seemed simple and almost crude, and yet contained profound meaning that was impossible to decipher.

The statue's eyes lacked any expression whatsoever, making the statue itself seem completely lifeless. It almost seemed to be a mere decoration standing guard over the ancestral land.

However, from a distance, it was possible to see that the statue was looking up into the sky, staring off into the distance as if... it was waiting for something.

Any Fang Clan member who had been to the ancestral land knew about this statue. According to the legends, the origins of the statue were a complete mystery. Supposedly, it had flown here from somewhere out in the starry sky, the same year that the Ji Clan changed the Heavens and took over the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

From then on, the statue had remained in this spot, apparently guarding the ancestral land.

Over the years, rumors began to spread that the statue was not just there to guard the ancestral land, but actually, all of the Fang Clan's bloodlines.

Years and years passed, and eventually, the rumors and stories died out. In every generation of the Fang Clan, there would be many people who came and laid eyes on the statue. However, they never called to mind the absurd stories of the past. After all... they were simply legends.

As for the reason why the statue held its head up as if it were waiting for something, people had long since stopped wondering about it.

No one had any idea why this statue had come here to the Fang Clan on its own... nor what it was waiting for.

It emanated the aura of a powerful expert, an intense aura that was strong enough to shake Heaven and Earth. When Meng Hao looked at it, the feeling he got was so intense that not even the Grand Elder could compare.

This statue was so strong... that in the past, Meng Hao wouldn't have been able to even identify how powerful it was. Now, though, when he looked at the statue, he understood.... This statue's aura was almost like that of a Paragon!

Meng Hao stood in the vast land between the two mountain chains. This was the location that he had appeared in upon entering the ancestral land. Currently, he was standing there stock-still, looking thoughtfully at the statue.

He was well aware that this trip to the ancestral land was an ambush. He also knew that the best choice had been to not come here, but instead take advantage of the opportunity given him by the Grand Elder.

In fact, originally he had no plans whatsoever to enter this place. However, after looking into the vortex and seeing this enormous statue, his heart had filled with roaring.

The roaring had soon inundated him completely, tugging at him, pulling

him into distant memories.

He trembled, and his eyes flashed with reminiscence. He couldn't even control himself as he walked forward to stand in front of the statue. He came to a stop in front of its foot, after which he reached his hand out and patted it gently.

His hand shook, and after it touched the statue, his whole body started trembling. He slowly looked up at the enormously tall statue, and then started to float up into the air.

He moved slowly, as if he wanted to take a clear look at the entire statue. Eventually, he reached its head, and looked into its eyes. It was at this point... that tears appeared in his own eyes.

"Terracotta soldier...." he murmured softly. Finally, the tears began to roll down his cheeks and fall to the ground. He remembered this terracotta soldier being about three meters tall. Even though it was now much bigger than before, he would never forget this terracotta soldier with whom he had such a connection.

The only reason he had chosen to enter this ancestral land despite all the danger... was because of this statue.

Back in the temple, when he had looked into the vortex and seen the statue, he almost couldn't believe it.

How could he have forgotten about this statue...? How was it even possible??

This was... one of the two terracotta soldiers that had been created for him in illusory world of the Second Plane of the ancient Demon Immortal Sect, by his foster father Ke Yunhai!

He would never, ever be able to forget the life he had lived as Ke Jiusi back in the ancient Demon Immortal Sect.

"Father...." said Meng Hao, tears streaming down his face. His entire body shook, and as he looked at the statue, he wept. All of the memories of the ancient Demon Immortal Sect flooded into his mind. All of a sudden, Ke Yunhai's stern and yet loving face appeared in his mind.

The ninety-nine bell tolls from that year seemed to echo in his ears once again.<sup>1</sup>

He had long since assumed that he would never see the two terracotta soldiers again. He had searched for them in the Third Plane of the ancient Demon Immortal Sect, in the real world, but hadn't found them.

There was no possible way that Meng Hao would ever have thought that he might see one of the statues here... in the Fang Clan's ancestral land.

Ke Yunhai, knowing that his longevity was reaching its end, had created this terracotta soldier to protect Meng Hao. It was only because of it that Meng Hao had unhesitatingly entered the ancestral land, despite knowing of the dangers.

It wouldn't have mattered if the danger had been exponentially greater than it was, Meng Hao would never have hesitated to come here.

And the entire reason... was because of Ke Yunhai!

—

Note from Deathblade: I originally translated the statue as stone soldier, and even called it a wooden soldier, once. I'm officially changing it to "terracotta soldier" and have already gone back to change previous references.

\*

1. Ke Yunhai died on the ninety-ninth bell toll in [chapter 597](#).

# Chapter 946: A Certain Object, a Certain Person

What was it waiting for?

This was a question that no one in the Fang Clan had been able to answer for generations.

Meng Hao looked at the statue, weeping, fully aware... that the statue had been waiting for him.

It had waited here alone for him for tens of thousands of years....

The reason it had flown here to the Fang Clan was because of the soul blood that had emerged from Meng Hao's forehead to connect him to the statue. Because of that, it didn't matter how much time separated them, or who ended up taking possession of the soldier. Meng Hao... was always its original master. 1

Years ago, before Meng Hao had even been born, the statue flew through space, guided by his blood, all the way to the Fang Clan. It had found a place where it sensed a familiar bloodline, and then chosen to wait there in silence.

This was the simple answer to the question asked by so many members of the Fang Clan.

This was only one of the two statues that had been created for Meng Hao by Ke Yunhai.

As for the other statue, perhaps it had fallen in battle at some point throughout the years. Or perhaps it was in some other distant location, standing alone and looking off into the sky just like this statue, waiting for Meng Hao to come.

Time passed by slowly, and eventually, Meng Hao sat down cross-legged on the statue's head. He patted the surface of the statue, and his expression continued to be one of reminiscence. He recalled everything that had happened in the ancient Demon Immortal Sect, and his heart

filled with sorrow.

Sometimes, a certain object will make you think of a certain person.

When Meng Hao looked at the statue, he missed Ke Yunhai. He missed the man he had called father in that ancient world.

At the same time that Meng Hao sat down on the statue, there were nine areas in the Fang Clan ancestral land where the air distorted, and nine black-robed men emerged. They immediately produced jade slips that they could use to detect bloodlines, then transformed into beams of light that shot away from their original locations.

Killing intent boiled in the ancestral land.

One of the black-robed men held the jade slip in hand, and the desire to kill gleamed in his eyes as he realized that he was the closest of them all to Meng Hao. He made no effort to conceal the level of his cultivation base. Power exploded out as he shot through the air in a beam of light, following the jade slip's guidance.

His cultivation base caused the clouds up above to seethe, and the ground to shake. This was an Ancient Realm cultivation base, and as he sped through the air, it was possible to see nine lamps behind him.

They were wooden lamps that burned with green flames. Eight of the lamps were lit, one was extinguished. They began orbiting around the man, and they pulsed with the power of a natural law of Heaven and Earth!

The Ancient Realm is also called the Ancient Soul. Based on the accumulations and preparations made in the Immortal Realm, a minimum of nine Soul Lamps will appear upon breaking through to the Ancient Realm. More can appear depending on the profundity of the cultivator's cultivation base. To proceed through the Ancient Realm, the lamps must be extinguished one by one. The extinguishing of each lamp counts as a deadly test, and if the cultivator can extinguish all of the lamps and remain alive, then they will be qualified to step into the Dao Realm!

However, to do so is incredibly hard!

The more Soul Lamps one possesses, the harder it is to break through,

and the greater the chance of death. At the same time, though, the more Soul Lamps one has... the more shockingly powerful they will be if they succeed in breaking through!

That was so much so that there were some people with ten or more Soul Lamps who, after reaching the late Ancient Realm, were qualified to fight with someone in the Dao Realm!

In any given clan or sect, a cultivator with one extinguished Soul Lamp would be considered to have the status of an Elder. The single stamp of a foot could shake everything. Just one such person would be enough to slaughter Meng Hao, but Fang Xiushan was obviously uneasy about the situation. It was impossible to say what vast price he had paid, for he had actually hired nine almighty Ancient Realm cultivators, each of them with one extinguished Soul Lamp. Clearly, he wanted no mishaps or accidents in having Meng Hao exterminated.

Meanwhile, a vague image appeared high up in the air where it was impossible for anyone to see. An old man hovered there, looking down at Meng Hao, who was still sitting on the statue's head.

This image was none other than the divine will of the Seventh Patriarch from the subterranean cavern beneath the Fang Clan.

When he saw Meng Hao sitting there abjectly on top of the statue, he gaped in shock.

"What's the kid doing?" he thought.

Meng Hao sat there atop of the statue for a while before raising his head and looking off into the distance, where he saw a figure speeding toward him like an arrow piercing through the roiling clouds.

The figure moved with incredible speed, bursting with astonishing energy that seemed capable of splitting Heaven and Earth. This was a power that Meng Hao could never fight against. Behind the figure were nine lamps, eight burning and one extinguished, which emanated a primordial will that cast strange colors into the sky.

Meng Hao's eyes widened. This was his first time seeing Soul Lamps,

and after a moment of consideration, the coldness in his eyes grew more intense.

“Soul Lamps are cultivated in the Ancient Realm....” he murmured. “So, an Ancient Realm expert has appeared in the ancestral land. Fang Xiushan... is this the expression of your killing intent?” He looked at the figure that split the air as it shot toward him. It was a powerful expert wearing a black robe, and he was closing in rapidly.

He made no effort to conceal his monstrous cultivation base or his massive killing intent. A wind kicked up, spreading across the lands and kicking up dust. The wind couldn’t dispel the bleak feeling that lay over the land, and in fact, made everything even more harsh and desolate.

The moment Meng Hao saw the black robe, killing intent flickered in his eyes. He immediately thought back to how he had fled from deadly pursuit in the starry sky.

“So, I guessed correctly,” he thought. “It was Fang Wei’s bloodline who tried to prevent me from making it back to the clan alive.” His face was calm as he faced the wild wind. His robes and hair flapped in the wind, and yet, he continued to calmly pat the statue’s head.

The Seventh Patriarch’s divine will image floated in midair, astonished. In his opinion, Meng Hao was now facing an Ancient Realm expert with one extinguished Soul Lamp. For him to be acting so calm left the Seventh Patriarch in a state of wonderment.

“Let’s see what kind of trump card the kid has to get him out of this deadly situation,” thought the Seventh Patriarch, smiling and paying close attention. He had already decided that he would take action in the moment before Meng Hao would actually be killed.

The reason he had come here, though, was not for Meng Hao, but rather, for those people who had dared to violate the clan rules.

Screaming wind filled the air as the black-robed man shot toward Meng Hao. He was middle-aged and very skinny. His expression was calm, without the slightest bit of excitement visible. To him, killing a member of the Junior generation who wasn’t even an Immortal, was far too simple of

a task.

It didn't matter if his target had a rare true Immortal fleshly body. To him, Meng Hao was merely a member of a younger generation. In his opinion, Fang Xiushan was making a mountain out of a molehill to ask nine people to all attack Meng Hao.

By this point, he was about 3,000 meters away from Meng Hao. In a flash, that distance shrank to only a few hundred meters.

He said nothing, just extended his right hand and pointed toward Meng Hao.

In response, the land up ahead twisted as a huge fissure opened up. It looked like a vicious, evil dragon that shot toward Meng Hao.

Bizarre colors flashed, and natural law manifested. The light and the darkness in the world seemed to be in flux.

From a distance, the sky appeared to have become a huge net; as soon as the fissure appeared in the ground, the entire sky seemed to have shattered!

Meng Hao's pupils constricted. The man's arrival made it seem as if a stifling pressure were weighing down on the entire area, like Heavenly might. The pressure caused his blood to seethe, and his cultivation base to begin to shatter. Even his fleshly body began to emanate cracking sounds.

"So this is an Ancient Realm expert, huh...?" A strange light gleamed in Meng Hao's eyes as the air ripped apart in response to the man's waving finger. This man's manipulation of the natural law of Heaven and Earth had already reached the acme of perfection; apparently, if this man wanted the air to rip apart, then the air would absolutely do just that.

An intense sensation of deadly crisis rose up in Meng Hao.

However, as that fissure snaked toward him, Meng Hao's lips twisted up into a smile of ridicule.

In that moment, he did not move. What moved was the statue beneath him!

The statue's eyes had previously been blank, without the slightest sign of life. But now, they suddenly began to shine with bright light that turned into consciousness. The face now flickered with expression, and its aura roiled out.

It was nothing more than an aura, and yet it caused Heaven and Earth to tremble, and the fissure that was extending rapidly toward Meng Hao suddenly vanished into nothing!

The massive net up in the sky also collapsed.

Rumbling sounds echoed out in all directions, and the ground quaked. The mountains themselves shook as Meng Hao's statue seemed to wake up from a slumber that had lasted for tens of thousands of years. It was as if it were being resurrected from the dead.

Its aura grew stronger and stronger, growing infinitely close to the level of a Paragon. This type of Paragon was not the same type of Paragon as the title held by that white-robed woman who had appeared in that year in the Three Great Daoist Societies' trial by fire. This was... the Quasi-Dao Realm, which was referred to by the title Paragon in the Nine Mountains and Seas!

As for why exactly it was referred to in that manner, there was a specific reason!

The terracotta soldier's eyes were growing brighter and clearer, and its energy was surging to monstrous heights. It was as if the statue was now rising up to accomplish the mission assigned to it by Ke Yunhai all those years ago!

Its mission... was to protect Meng Hao for all time, to eternally act as his safeguard!

It was to never allow Meng Hao to come to any harm, to never experience grief, and most definitely to never be killed. That... was the statue's mission, and the entire purpose why Ke Yunhai had created it.

Meng Hao sat on top of the statue, and he saw Ke Yunhai in his mind's eye. His face was stern, but his eyes were filled with love. Yet again, tears

appeared in Meng Hao's eyes.

Once again... he felt Ke Yunhai's fatherly love.

This time, it was manifested in the real world.

Cracking sounds could be heard, and everything shook. Fissures appeared in the mountain chains and then spread out in all directions.

The middle-aged man's face flickered with disbelief and astonishment, and his mind reeled. He subconsciously stopped in place, and his eyes widened.

He was also a member of the Fang Clan, and what he was seeing left him stupefied. He watched with his own eyes as the legendary protector of the ancestral land and the Fang Clan itself, that enormous statue which had never budged over countless years... suddenly moved!

He saw Meng Hao sitting atop the statue as it lifted its right foot and took a step forward.

From a distance, the statue looked boundlessly tall and shockingly powerful. When its foot landed on the ground, the entire world quaked. At the same time, the statue's arms moved, and cracking sounds could be heard as the mountains that were connected to the statue crumbled, transforming into nothing but rocks and dust that rolled off of the statue down onto the ground.

\*

Meng Hao was bound to the statues by blood from his forehead in [chapter 572](#). Later, he went looking for them unsuccessfully in [chapter 598](#).

# Chapter 947: Quasi-Dao Paragons

Everything was covered in a haze of dust, which only served to make the statue in the center of it all even more shocking.

It raised its other foot and took another step, causing the land to rumble, and more mountains to collapse.

The haze of dust continued to spread out rapidly in pulsing waves, creating an astonishing sight. The middle-aged man's scalp went numb, and his mind spun. This was literally the most unbelievable thing he had ever seen in his entire life. His face instantly became devoid of blood, and he looked shocked beyond belief.

He suddenly cried out involuntarily, "That's... that's... that's the aura of a Quasi-Dao Realm Paragon!"

His eyes were wide, and his heart pounded wildly.

He was well-aware how powerful a Quasi-Dao Paragon was, and what they represented. He was extremely conscientious of the fact that the Quasi-Dao Realm... was a completely astonishing Realm within the Nine Mountains and Seas. It was a realm of madness and terror, so powerful that strongest experts in the Nine Mountains and Seas had no choice but to call people in that Realm... Paragons!

The middle-aged man wasn't the only shocked one. The old man up in midair, the manifestation of the Seventh Patriarch's divine will, was watching with wide eyes and open mouth. He was completely astonished, and could scarcely believe what he was seeing.

"How is this possible?!?!" he thought, panting, his mind spinning. "The Dao Guardsman, is actually... moving!!" He suddenly looked at Meng Hao sitting on top of the statue's head, and viewed the look of sorrow on his face in a new light. For an instant, the rarely-shocked Seventh Patriarch's scalp went numb.

The ground quaked and mountains crumbled. A massive rumbling sound filled the air, and the haze of dust churned as boulders crashed

down.

The weeds in the area were blown flat by the wind, and cracks appeared in the surface of the ground, although it was all rapidly covered over by the dust.

Up in the air, the Seventh Patriarch was panting as he stared mutely at the statue.

As for the skinny man, he couldn't be more shocked. His mind reeled as he looked at the earth-shaking statue. He could sense the aura emanating out from it, and it turned his face ashen. Without another moment's hesitation, he fled.

This unexpected turn of events was something he couldn't handle. From his perspective, killing Meng Hao should have been as simple as turning over his hand. Moments later, though, everything was completely reversed.

He suddenly realized why Fang Xiushan would hire nine experts like himself to kill a mere member of the Junior generation. Although the conclusion he reached was actually fallacious, in his mind, it was the obvious answer.

"Dammit! How could things turn out like this! Fang Xiushan, you bastard, you conned me. Y-y-you sent me, with one extinguished Soul Lamp, in here to kill a cultivator protected by a Quasi-Dao Paragon? Why didn't you tell us ahead of time that this inhuman Fang Hao could actually bring the Dao Guardsman back to life!?!?" The man retreated with all the speed he could muster.

However, in the moment that he began to flee, the statue's gaze stabbed through the haze of dust like a beam of light to land directly on the man.

In the instant the statue's gaze locked onto him, a sound like thunder rumbled in the man's mind. An intense sense of deadly crisis rose up, and he let out a bellow. He instantly spit out blood and unleashed a secret magic to try to flee.

He was scared. As an Ancient Realm expert, he did not often encounter

frightening situations, but as of this moment, he was afraid. In fact, he was terrified, all the way down to his bones.

He knew exactly how terrifyingly powerful a Quasi-Dao Paragon was. Years ago, he had actually personally witnessed the wild and devastating power of just such an individual.

There was no way he couldn't feel terror. The awakening of the statue shook his mind, and caused him to think back to the legends he had heard regarding the statue.

"I... have provoked a truly inhuman monster! I can't believe... I can't believe this is happening!!" He felt incredible regret, and swore that, if he managed to live through this, he would make things very difficult for Fang Xiushan when he got out of the ancestral land.

However, it was at this moment that the huge statue's hands tightened on the enormous greatsword that was thrust into the ground. Rumbling and cracking sounds could be heard from the ground as fissures spread out from the sword in all directions. Suddenly, the greatsword... was pulled out from the earth!

The shocking statue's eyes were as cold as ice as it hefted the greatsword in both hands. Then it swung the sword, which descended as fast as lighting toward the fleeing man.

The sword caused the whole world to go silent.

The avalanches of boulders made no sound. The crumbling mountains were silent. The haze of dust seethed in terrifying quietude. It was as if time itself... were frozen in place.

The fleeing man also seemed to be stopped in midair, his expression that of terror and astonishment. His pupils were frozen in place, and the nine Soul Lamps behind him were motionless. It was as if everything in the world were completely incapable of moving.

The only thing that was moving was the statue's greatsword. As it cleaved downward, blood oozed from the man's forehead, then trickled down his nose, then his chin. Finally, the sword passed through his torso,

simultaneously shattering his Soul Lamps.

The world returned to normal. The terracotta soldier's greatsword once again stabbed into the ground, which trembled and quaked. Sound returned... in midair, the middle-aged man's body had been completely cleaved into two pieces, and all of his Soul Lamps were destroyed.

The man had numerous magical items, all of which were shattered, and flew out in pieces along with the man's flesh and blood.

There was no way for him to fight back or block. He couldn't even struggle, let alone evade.

Blood sprayed out as his Nascent Divinity, his Soul Lamps, all of him... faded away.

Only his bag of holding remained, which came to float in front of Meng Hao.

Meng Hao sat silently on the statue.

High up in the air, the Seventh Patriarch took a deep breath. Even he felt a sense of fear when he looked at the statue, and also knew how shocking and terrifying its sword was.

"That sword has its own Dao that replaces the natural law of Heaven and Earth! That sword... can sever Daos, sever natural laws, can sever... anything that exists!"

"This is definitely the power of a Quasi-Dao Paragon!! However... it's obviously nothing more than a statue! If a statue could be so powerful, then whoever created that statue... must be even more terrifying!"

"I suppose... only someone in the true Dao Realm, who also possessed some rare Heavenly material or Earthly treasure, would be able to create something like this. But...with such a treasure, it would make more sense to craft some other item, something that would be of more use to a Dao Realm cultivator." Simply looking at the statue caused the Seventh Patriarch's heart to tremble.

He knew that Quasi-Dao Realm cultivators... were a maniacal bunch.

They were madmen who could ignore anybody; they were people who nobody dared to provoke.

They were people who had prepared for years, who had transcended one deadly Soul Lamp tribulation after another, who had reached the peak of the Ancient Realm filled with hope. But after extinguishing their final Soul Lamp, they were unable to enter the Dao Realm, and would exist forever half a step away from it. Their lifespans had crumbled away, and they would be left with only a few dozen years of life. People like that... were in the Quasi-Dao Realm!

They were doomed to die, and could not be saved by anything in Heaven and Earth. Therefore, they went mad, stuck half a step into the Dao Realm, possessing a certain level of Dao Essence that earned them respect and awe. No one dared to provoke them, and everyone called them Paragons.

For tens of thousands of years, only eleven such people had ever appeared in the Fang Clan. Some of them went mad and carried out slaughters. Some of them quietly waited until their life force reached its end.

When the Grand Elder had spoken of past Dao Realm Patriarchs of the Fang Clan who were buried in the ancestral land, he was referring to... Quasi-Dao Paragons! The only one among these who was a true Dao Realm expert was the first generation Patriarch!

Ke Yunhai had also met with failure at that final step. However, his cultivation base was so terrifyingly profound that, even after his failure, even being only half a step into the Dao Realm, even with a failing longevity... he had still managed to force out many more years of life to protect his son.

At that time, his battle prowess had far exceeded the Ancient Realm, and could actually be considered to be in the Dao Realm.

As for his final Soul Lamp, that was the very lamp with the body of a dragon and the wick of a phoenix, the one he had been buried with! 1

He had actually used that lamp to make the terracotta soldiers, which had thus contained much of Ke Yunhai's life force. As a result... they were

incredibly powerful!!

The Seventh Patriarch was panting as he looked at the statue in fear. He himself... was not in the Dao Realm; he was only in the Ancient Realm. However, he had summoned fifteen Soul Lamps, and to date had managed to extinguish thirteen of them.

“Only Elder Brother, the Earth Patriarch, could suppress that statue with his Dao Realm cultivation base. Nobody else could, not even Old Second and Old Third with their fourteen extinguished Soul Lamps. They only have one more lamp each to extinguish, but they still wouldn’t be matches for this statue. After all, they’re still merely in the Ancient Realm!”

Most shocking of all to him was that this Dao Guardsman of the Fang Clan was actually protecting Meng Hao!

“This kid actually managed to get the Dao Guardsman to move! How did he pull it off? Why was he able to do it? The fact that he was so confident before shows that he was sure ahead of time that the statue would fight for him and protect him!

“This... is absurdly unbelievable!” The Seventh Patriarch took an incredulous breath as he looked down at what was happening. There was no way for him to explain what was going on, and if his divine will wasn’t here to personally witness it, then, if he had been told the story later, he would have called it nonsensical ravings.

And yet, here he was watching it happen, shocked.

Meng Hao patted the statue’s head. Gradually, the land around him quieted down. The dust faded away, and everything returned to normal. Meng Hao looked up, and returned the precious memories of Ke Yunhai to the depths of his heart. Sometimes a certain object will make you think of a certain person. His memories filled him with grief that he couldn’t somehow undo the death of Ke Yunhai.

He closed his eyes for a long moment before opening them again. Then he looked down at the statue. To him, it was no mere terracotta soldier, but rather, a precious memento left to him by Ke Yunhai.

"Let's go," he said softly. "Come with me to take a look around this ancestral land of the Fang Clan." The statue's eyes shone brightly as it flew into the air and took Meng Hao further into the ancestral land.

That simple action almost caused the Seventh Patriarch's eyeballs to pop out of his head. He very nearly cried out in shock.

\*

1. Ke Yunhai's lamp was described in [chapter 569](#). He used it to make the soldiers in [chapter 572](#). In [chapter 597](#), it mentioned that the only thing in Ke Yunhai's tomb was the lamp. The lamp was mentioned again in [chapter 600](#) when Meng Hao went to visit the tomb later.

# Chapter 948: Terrifying

He gasped, and a look of disbelief covered his face as he stared at the statue taking Meng Hao off into the distance. He was well-aware of the difference between Meng Hao getting the statue to protect him, and getting it to carry him around. They were two completely different things.

One required passively responding, the other required taking action!

"He... can actually control the clan's Dao Guardsman!!" The Seventh Patriarch was panting. Now that he knew the full situation, his mind spun, and he completely forgot about any rule-violating members of the clan. He looked at Meng Hao with shining eyes, and couldn't help but be filled with the growing notion that Meng Hao would be a future pillar of the clan.

As Meng Hao proceeded along, he opened up the bag of holding that had belonged to the man who had just been killed. He scanned its contents with divine sense, finding a good quantity of spirit stones and Immortal jade. There were also a lot of medicinal pills, and even some jade slips. One of those jade slips was black, and Meng Hao's face grew frosty as soon as he picked it up and scanned it.

"He was an Elder of the Fang Clan!" he murmured. The command medallion he held in his hand was a token of authentication provided by the clan, and revealed that the man from moments ago was definitely one of the clan Elders.

After all, this was the Fang Clan's ancestral land. Fang Xiushan wanted Meng Hao dead more than anything, but he still wouldn't dare to allow outsiders into the ancestral land. He wouldn't have been able to bear the consequences of that.

In his estimation, when it came to killing Meng Hao, reducing the risk and aftermath was only a matter of using his bloodline's status in the clan a bit cleverly.

After grabbing the identity medallion from the bag of holding and tossing it aside, Meng Hao pulled a jade box out. It glittered with bright light, and emanated strong Immortal qi.

After opening it, he began to pant, and his eyes shone brightly.

Inside the jade box was a tiny bell made completely of jade. It was exquisitely beautiful, and Immortal qi swirled around it. Meng Hao instantly recognized that it was an Immortal treasure of the highest quality. It was definitely no ordinary object.

He picked up the tiny bell and held it in his hand. Then, he sent some Immortal qi from his Immortal meridian into the bell, which caused it to emit a droning sound. It flew up into the air above his head, growing to a size of three meters and rotating around him, emitting countless magical symbols at the same time.

An intense pressure immediately spread out.

Meng Hao's eyes shone, and he took a deep breath.

"As far as Immortal treasures are concerned, this bell is definitely of an extremely high quality!" He could sense the Immortal might emanating off of the bell, and his eyes glittered as he opened his mouth and breathed in. In response, the bell shrunk and then turned into a beam of light that shot into Meng Hao's mouth and came to rest inside of his Immortal meridian.

Immediately, his entire body filled with the echoing toll of a bell. The bell began to emit bright light, and at the same time, his Immortal meridian grew more solid.

Meng Hao's spirits were instantly lifted. What he didn't know was that this Immortal bell had been a gift prepared by Fang Xiushan for that clan Elder. Although it wasn't an Ancient treasure, it was an extremely high quality Immortal treasure, and with a bit of refining could have been turned into something similar to an Ancient Realm treasure.

Ancient treasures were rare, and were something that many Ancient Realm experts didn't even possess. Even though the man had been a Fang Clan elder, he had only extinguished one Soul Lamp, and therefore didn't qualify to acquire Ancient treasures from the clan.

Actually, Fang Xiushan had expended quite a bit of resources a few years back to acquire the tiny bell. However, for the sake of having Meng Hao

killed, he had employed everything at his disposal.

"He was a clan Elder, and all he had was this one magical item?" Meng Hao seemed a bit skeptical, but then he remembered all of the magical items that had shattered in the moment of his death.

"There seem to be many unique aspects to the Ancient Realm," he thought. He scanned the rest of the jade slips in the bag of holding, and then suddenly, his eyes came to rest on one of them. After further scanning, his face darkened.

This jade slip was a bloodline tracker. He could clearly see nine dots of light, one of which represented himself. The other eight were spread out in various directions, and were all heading towards him.

The nearest one wasn't very far away.

"So, you actually sent nine people to kill me." Meng Hao's eyes were like ice as he sent out some divine will that caused the terracotta soldier to stop in place, then change directions. Suddenly, it began to speed off in the direction of the dot of light closest to Meng Hao.

"There's no need to come looking for me," said Meng Hao. "I'll come to you!" He sat there cross-legged atop the statue, his eyes boiling with murderous intent. His pupils shone with an intense light like that of a razor-sharp blade.

As of this moment, his entire person seethed with the desire to kill.

He wouldn't dare to kill anyone inside the Fang Clan itself. That was a violation of clan rules. However, in this place... he had no compunctions whatsoever. Since these people had come here to kill him, then he might as well return the favor one by one!

"This place won't open up again for two months. That's plenty of time for me to have some fun with you people!" Powerful killing intent flickered in his eyes, and the murderous aura which surrounded him grew stronger.

Up above, the Seventh Patriarch followed along, his excitement and interest in Meng Hao growing stronger.

The terracotta soldier moved with such incredible speed that it caused sonic booms to echo out. It shot forward, seemingly slicing a hole into the air of the ancestral land.

Meng Hao sat cross-legged up above, his hair whipping about as the powerful wind buffeted his true Immortal fleshly body.

Roughly five hundred kilometers ahead of him, a beam of light shot through the air, within which was a black-robed young man. Although his appearance was young, there was something about the way he furrowed his brow that seemed to carry an ancient will.

He was surrounded by nine lamps, which rotated around him. Just like the other man, eight were burning and one was extinguished. These Soul Lamps didn't seem to be real, but rather illusory.

His passing caused the sky and the land to distort, and he kept his hands clasped behind his back as he proceeded.

His expression was calm, but a gleam of vigilance could be seen deep in his eyes.

"I can't believe one of us died...." he murmured, his eyes flickering. "All we're supposed to do is kill someone from the Junior generation, and yet somebody actually perished.... Furthermore, he wasn't killed by something dangerous from within the ancestral land. He died a short time after making contact with that member of the Junior generation." A strange gleam appeared in the young man's eyes. Moments ago, one of the dots of light had vanished from the jade slip he had been observing, which left him shocked.

"No wonder Fang Xiushan wanted nine of us to come in here. This Junior... must be harboring some incredible secret!"

"Whatever that secret is, it enabled him to kill an Ancient Realm cultivator with one extinguished Soul Lamp, while he himself barely counts as being in the Immortal Realm!"

"However, whatever method he's using definitely can't be used long-term." A cold glow appeared in the young man's eyes, and his pupils

glittered with greed. He lifted his right hand and sent divine sense into the jade slip held therein. Then, his face flickered, and he suddenly stopped in place.

"That can't be right," he thought, frowning. "He changed direction, and now he's heading toward me.... And look at how fast he's moving! Even with a true Immortal fleshly body, he shouldn't be able to move that fast!" The young man hesitated.

"Is it just an empty show of strength, a bluff? Is he just trying to scare me off, or... does that secret technique give him the confidence to think he can kill me?" The young man's eyes flickered a few times before filling with determination.

"It doesn't matter. I can just check the situation out from a distance to see whether or not he's just putting on a show." With that, the young man hovered there in midair, coldly looking off into the distance as he waited for Meng Hao to approach.

He was being very cautious, and was even ready to flee away at top speed if necessary. He kept his cultivation base rotating, ensuring that he was at the peak of power and readiness.

After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, a rumbling sound could suddenly be heard from off in the distance. Everything began to shake.

Even the condition of the sky changed; the clouds churned, and endless bolts of lightning danced about.

The young man's eyes went wide, and he sent his divine sense out to scan the area up ahead. It was at this point that a tremor ran through him, and his eyes went wide with disbelief. He couldn't even breathe, and his eyes bulged. It almost looked like someone was strangling him. His mind filled with a buzz, as if someone has struck him hard on the top of the head.

He staggered backward, panting, face pale.

"That's... that's...." He almost didn't dare to believe what he was seeing.

“What is that!?!?”

Tens of thousands of meters up in the sky, the clouds parted as an enormous statue appeared. It was thousands of meters high, and caused the clouds to surge away from it as it descended.

Its energy was shocking and virtually impossible to describe!

Its speed was incredible, causing flames to lick the air around the terracotta soldier. It was like a shooting star!

Meng Hao sat cross-legged atop the terracotta soldier, eyes flashing with killing intent. He looked like a drawn sword that refused to be sheathed without shedding blood!

RUMMMBLLLE!

Massive roaring sounds filled the air as the terracotta soldier screamed through the air toward the black-robed youth. As it neared, the aura of a Quasi-Dao Paragon rippled out in all directions, shaking everything.

The terracotta soldier's eyes were icy and emotionless, and it held a greatsword in its hand. When the young man saw all of this, his face drained of blood.

“That's the ancestral land's Dao Guardsman!!

“It has the aura of a Quasi-Dao Paragon!!

“How... how could this be? He... he can actually control the Dao Guardsman!?!?” The black-robed young man's scalp was tingling so hard it seemed like his head was about to explode. Flabbergasted and scared witless, he didn't even have time to think. He immediately turned and employed all the power he could muster in a mad dash to flee.

As of that moment, he cursed the fact that he had only extinguished one Soul Lamp. He cursed the fact that he couldn't flee fast enough. He cursed the fact that he had been conceited enough to just stand there waiting for his opponent to arrive.

He suddenly understood why that other Ancient Realm Elder had died!!

“Damn you, Fang Xiushan!! I can't believe you sent us in here to kill a

monster who can control the Dao Guardsman! You... you didn't send us in here to kill him... you obviously sent us in here so that he could kill us!!” The black-robed young man's heart was pounding, and his face was as white as death. Nearly frightened out of his mind by the sense of deadly crisis, he roared, spitting out blood and using all the secret magics he knew to try to get away.

# Chapter 949: Perilous Ancestral Land

No one outside could see the things that were happening in the ancestral land.

Neither the Grand Elder nor Fang Wei's father and grandfather could see anything at all. The Grand Elder hadn't been lying when he had explained that point. It was literally impossible for anyone to observe what occurred inside.

In the Fang Clan, everything was going along as normal, except that the direct bloodline clan members were very nervous. Fang Xi was in incredibly low spirits, and was very worried about Meng Hao.

The Dao of Alchemy Division had received news of Meng Hao heading into the ancestral land as a trial by fire, and were also extremely anxious. In fact, the eighteen tier 8 alchemists all went in person to speak with the Grand Elder.

A huge argument ensued that ended with the tier 8 alchemists storming off in a fury. Not long after, the Dao of Alchemy Division announced that they wouldn't concoct pills for the clan until Meng Hao returned safely.

As word of this development spread, the entire clan was shaken. The Grand Elder then personally went to the Dao of Alchemy Division to pay respects to Pill Elder, yet Pill Elder flatly refused to see him.

It was at this point that Fang Wei's bloodline was starting to realize that Meng Hao had firmly rooted himself within the clan, and had built up such a level of power that even they were beginning to feel fear rising up inside of them.

The Dao of Alchemy Division was definitely Meng Hao's bastion of reliance within the clan!

The whole matter was a major slip-up on the part of Fang Xiushan. The only thing he could do was spend vast resources to placate the anger and dissatisfaction of the Elders in his own bloodline regarding the losses they had suffered.

However, Fang Xiushan still had hope. As long as Meng Hao died, then the Dao of Alchemy Division wouldn't fight against the clan over a corpse. Everything would be resolved, and his own son, Fang Wei, would once again be the number one Chosen in the clan, and his bloodline would finally be able to supersede the current direct bloodline!

However, his hope... was rapidly unraveled because of what happened next.

Fang Wei was currently sealed in secluded meditation in his secret chamber. Fang Xiushan sat cross-legged outside, his face a mass of disbelief as he looked at a crystal he held in his hand.

Within the crystal was an image of the Fang Clan's Lifeslip Hall. There, countless jade slips that represented the lives of Fang Clan members were on display.

If a clan member died, the jade slip would shatter, immediately notifying the clan, which would then investigate the matter.

Moments ago, Fang Xiushan had been looking at Meng Hao's jade slip, which rested among all the other countless jade slips.

As soon as Meng Hao had returned to the clan and acquired a jade command medallion, he had also left a lifeslip in the Lifeslip Hall. Currently, it glowed with bright light, and wasn't even the least bit cracked.

On a higher shelf were the lifeslips of all of the clan's Ancient Realm clan members. Just now, one of those jade slips had made a cracking sound and then shattered. This instantly attracted a lot of attention, and an investigation had begun.

The shattering of that jade slip caused Fang Xiushan's heart to begin to pound.

He had paid a heavy price to arrange for nine Ancient Realm Elders to go into the ancestral land and kill Meng Hao.

"What happened in there!?!?" he thought, panting. "An Ancient Realm Elder... actually died? How!?!?

"To top it off, that damned son of a bitch is still alive!" He couldn't even imagine what possibly might have happened inside the ancestral land.

The clan began a thorough investigation into the Ancient Realm clan member's death. Fortunately for Fang Xiushan, he had previously arranged for all nine of the experts who entered the ancestral land to make it seem like they had left the planet to carry out clan assignments.

However, that would only delay the clan for so long. The rigorous investigation would eventually turn up clues.

"He probably died because of some dangerous situation in the ancestral land," thought Fang Xiushan. "This was nothing more than an accident.... It won't be much longer before that damned son of a bitch is dead in body and spirit!" Killing intent flickered in his eyes, and he couldn't wait to see Meng Hao's lifeslip shatter.

"Once the little son of a bitch is dead, and Wei'er makes his breakthrough to true Immortal Ascension, then... it doesn't matter even if people do discover the truth. By that time, it won't matter. Fang Hao's death will be meaningless to the clan!"

Fang Xiushan took a deep breath, and his eyes filled with veins of blood.

Meanwhile, in the Fang Clan ancestral land, the black-robed young man was indignantly cursing Fang Xiushan as he fled in terror.

"How shameless!" he thought. "What a deception! Two months? Dammit! There are still two more months... before this place will open up and I can get out of here. W-what do I do?" The young man's face was pale white as he fled. Behind him, rumbling sounds echoed out, piercing through his ears into his very heart.

Further back, Meng Hao's statue was wreathed in flames as it shot after the young man. Meng Hao sat cross-legged atop it, and as they closed in, his eyes flickered with killing intent.

The distance between them narrowed. 30,000 meters. 25,000 meters. 15,000 meters. 10,000 meters....

At that point the black-robed young man was virtually going crazy, and

was ready to pull out all the stops. He spun in place, performing an incantation gesture that caused his nine Soul Lamps to rotate rapidly and then shoot toward Meng Hao.

He was attacking with Soul Lamps that contained his own life force. From this, it was possible to see how mad and desperate he was.

When the eight lit and one extinguished Soul Lamps neared Meng Hao, Meng Hao's statue raised its greatsword, and the explosive aura of a Quasi-Dao Paragon exploded out.

"Leave him alive," Meng Hao suddenly said.

Instantly, the terracotta soldier switched the great sword from its right hand to its left. Then, its right hand shot out to grab the black-robed young man.

Instantly, everything in the area stopped moving, just like before. The black-robed young man was stuck in place, his body stiff and incapable of moving. His consciousness even began to fade.

A power surged out that was impossible to resist or fight against and seemed to envelop the entire sky. In front of the terracotta soldier, the black-robed young man with his one extinguished Soul Lamp was like nothing more than an insect.

When the terracotta soldier's huge hand reached the nine Soul Lamps, it almost seemed as if it was on a different plane of existence. It passed directly through them and, to the astonishment and despair of the black-robed young man, closed around him in the blink of an eye. As the hand tightened, cracking sounds could be heard as many of the young man's bones were crushed.

After grabbing and retrieving him, the world returned to normal. The air once again moved, and the sounds of the black-robed young man's screaming echoed out in all directions.

Blood sprayed from his mouth, and intense pain wracked his body. He was completely trapped inside the terracotta soldier's hand, his cultivation base dissipated and as weak as a mortal. He trembled, and hopelessness

filled his eyes, along with the fear of dying.

“Fang Xiushan!” he screamed. “I won’t let you off for this even if I become a ghost!” At the moment, he hated Meng Hao, but he hated Fang Xiushan even more.

“And you, Fang Hao,” he raged, “if it weren’t for our clan’s Dao Guardsman, I’d kill you... it would be as easy as crushing a chicken to death!” Blood oozed from his mouth, and his eyes shone with hatred for Meng Hao.

“At the moment,” said Meng Hao, his face calm. “I could crush you to death much easier than crushing a chicken.”

Eyes flickering, he performed a strange incantation gesture with his right hand. Suddenly, numerous magical symbols appeared on his hand.

The magical symbols flickered, some of them white and some of them black. It almost looked like his hand had turned black and white.

A bizarre aura appeared around him, seemingly forming a stream of qi that converged on his hand and then merged with the magical symbols. Soon, everything in the area looked black and white.

Meng Hao’s hand trembled, although no onlooker would be able to tell, not even the Seventh Patriarch up in midair. All he could sense was that the black and white magical symbols on Meng Hao’s right hand contained the aura of some sort of Essence.

This was... the Sixth Demon Sealing Hex!

Meng Hao had acquired it from the sword in the Ruins of Immortality, which contained the aura of the Sixth Hex. He had continuously contemplated enlightenment of the Hex, and was now attempting to use it. However, the magic was too difficult, and although he could complete its casting, he had never successfully used it.

Much of this had to do with his lack of appropriate targets to practice on, and right now, he had just such a living target in front of him.

His eyes shone with a strange light as his right hand suddenly stabilized,

and he pointed at the black-robed young man. Instantly, the black and white magical symbols merged together and shot toward him.

The man's eyes went wide, but he was incapable of resisting. The magical symbols flickered as they slammed into his forehead, and then began to bore into his body.

Meng Hao watched closely for the space of a few breaths. The black-robed young man's face distorted, and veins popped out on his forehead. He then let out miserable scream.

The sound of that scream even caused the Seventh Patriarch to wince.

Indescribable pain wracked the young man; it felt like his soul was being consumed and his body was being ripped away. Soon, his screams turned into something that sounded like the shrieks of an animal.

It lasted for the space of about five breaths before the young man's body suddenly exploded into a haze of blood and gore. He was dead, in body and in spirit.

Up in midair, the Seventh Patriarch gasped. As his solemn gaze came to rest back on Meng Hao, his eyes gradually began to fill with admiration.

"Quite ruthless," he thought. In his opinion, Meng Hao's temper was actually very similar to his own.

Meng Hao frowned and then sighed.

"Another failure. Maybe I'm not using it correctly." He thought back to the way the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer had used the Life-Death Hex, and how all the people he had hexed suddenly had their control of their own life or death taken away from them. Those people... had essentially become like puppets in the hand of the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer.

In the same moment that the young man died, Fang Xiushan was sitting in his place back in the Fang Clan's ancestral mansion. His face was pale as he saw... another of the life slips shatter.

"Impossible! This is impossible! The ancestral land is just too perilous!!" Fang Xiushan was trembling, and his eyes were bloodshot.

# Chapter 950: Scraping It Clean

In the moment that the young man died, a sharp cracking sound rang out in the Fang Clan's Lifeslip Hall in the ancestral mansion. The sound immediately attracted the attention of all the Elders in the ancestral mansion.

As beams of light began to shoot through the air, Fang Xiushan took a deep breath and forced himself into a state of calm. Then, he also flew into the air.

It didn't take long for multiple Elders to arrive at the Lifeslip Hall. Grand Elder Fang Tongtian was already there, hands clasped behind his back as he studied the shattered lifeslip. His expression gradually grew darker and darker.

People began to crowd into the hall, and agitated expressions appeared on their faces when they saw the shattered lifeslip.

The crowd began to converse in low tones.

"Another one... that's two lifeslips that have shattered in the past few days. I can't believe two Elders have perished!"

"Something strange is going on...."

"The strangest thing of all is that it was impossible to determine where exactly the first one died!"

Finally, the Grand Elder turned around and looked out at the crowd. His gaze lingered on Fang Xiushan for a moment.

Fang Xiushan's heart thumped, but his expression was calm.

"Two Elders have died in succession," the Grand Elder announced in a dignified voice. "And yet it has been impossible to use the power of their lifeslips to determine where exactly they died.... Where did they go?"

An Elder stepped out of the crowd, clasped hands and bowed. "According to my investigation, both of them went out alone on assignments from the clan."

“Assignments...? Do you really believe that?” Looking irritated, the Grand Elder flicked his sleeve and started to walk out. “Continue the investigation. Find out exactly how many Elders have gone out on supposed assignments. Furthermore, find out who gave them these assignments. I want all the details! Every single scrap of information!” The Grand Elder’s voice continued to echo out in the hall even after he was gone.

Fang Xiushan felt incredible pressure as he departed along with the rest of the crowd. Suddenly, the Grand Elder’s icy voice sounded out in his ear, transmitted via divine will.

“In our clan, nothing is more important than the clan rules. Therefore, I will be sure to shield Fang Wei from any trouble. However... if a third Elder dies, you had better start thinking of a way to explain all of this to me.”

Fang Xiushan trembled silently.

Back in the ancestral land, the black-robed young man died, and the seven other cultivators with the single extinguished Soul Lamps... all stopped in their tracks.

It was impossible for them to do anything else. All of them had a bloodline jade slip, and had clearly seen the other two suddenly die as soon as they got close to Meng Hao.

The first one could be chalked up to an accident, but two.... If any of these seven still believed that to be an accident, then they didn’t deserve to be called Ancient Realm experts.

The faces of all seven men flickered with shock. They couldn’t imagine what had happened, why two of their group who were supposed to kill a member of the Junior generation, were instead themselves killed.

Their hearts were shaken, and fear of Meng Hao gradually began to build inside of them. All of a sudden, the dot of light that represented Meng Hao seemed strange and mysterious.

Suddenly, the situation on Meng Hao’s jade slip changed, and his mouth

twisted into a cold smile. The seven dots of light were no longer closing in on him; in contrast, they were now speeding away from him in different directions.

"I bet you people are also stuck in here for two months. There will be plenty of time for us to have a little game of cat and mouse." Meng Hao patted the terracotta soldier again, which turned and flew off into the distance with him.

Meng Hao's eyes gleamed as he looked at the lands speeding by below, and gradually, a bashful expression appeared on his face. "Since I'm here, I need to get my hands on some of this ancestral land's good fortune, no matter what."

Up in the air, the Seventh Patriarch saw the gleam in Meng Hao's eyes, and then nodded to himself.

"Based on the gleam in his eyes, it seems he's going to go searching for some of the good fortune in the ancestral land. Good, this is what a descendant of the Fang Clan ought to do." Stroking his beard, he smiled. "The kid looks a bit dainty; although he slaughters enemies ruthlessly, he's also pure and charming. I wonder what kind of good fortune he's destined to get here."

This was the first time the old man had ever seen a gleam like that in Meng Hao's eyes, and also the first time he had seen him act bashfully....

"Whenever I visit a place, I scrape it clean," Meng Hao thought, justifying his actions to himself as best he could. "With this terracotta soldier to accompany me, if I let this place off any easier than usual, I would definitely regret it in the future!" With that, the gleam in his eye grew brighter.

Under Meng Hao's control, the terracotta soldier flew off into the distance.

The ancestral land was laid out in a long strip, and Meng Hao's current location was at the very beginning. After some time passed, and he had a chance to survey the lands up ahead, he sent some divine will into the terracotta soldier.

The terracotta soldier stopped, and Meng Hao rose to his feet and stared down at the ground. There below was a field of huge boulders. The surface of each boulder was carved with various images that contained natural law.

Meng Hao leapt off of the terracotta soldier and floated down into the field of boulders. As he looked around, his eyes began to shine brightly.

Up in midair, the Seventh Patriarch nodded to himself.

"Excellent. This area is nothing extremely special, but is actually very well suited to him. To gain enlightenment of some magical techniques would still count as good fortune." The Seventh Patriarch began to smile, but then quickly gaped in astonishment and then in confusion.

Down below, Meng Hao had backed up a bit, then sent his divine will out. Next, the terracotta soldier descended and used both of its hands to reach down and pluck a boulder out of the ground.

Meng Hao's eyes shone brightly as he quickly stored the boulder in his bag of holding, then sent the terracotta soldier to another boulder. It didn't take long before the dozens of boulders in the area were all pulled from the ground and placed into Meng Hao's bag of holding.

Afterwards, Meng Hao flew back up and sat down on the terracotta soldier's head, then proceeded onward excitedly.

Up in midair, the Seventh Patriarch still hadn't recovered from his shock. He stared at the dozens of holes in the ground left behind by Meng Hao, then gazed blankly at Meng Hao making his way off into the distance.

"What... what is he doing?" he murmured. "Didn't he come here to contemplate enlightenment? To gain good fortune?" Meng Hao's actions left him thoroughly shocked.

Time passed. Meng Hao caught sight of a rather small lake that looked like a mirror. As the sun glinted off of its surface, magical symbols rose up from the water.

Meng Hao waved his hand, and the terracotta soldier chopped down

with its greatsword. After a few slashes, it managed to slice all of the ground surrounding the lake. Afterward, Meng Hao struggled mightily to wrench the entire lake out of the ground and then put it in his bag of holding.

He actually had many bags of holding, some larger than others. After laboriously forcing the lake into one of them, he produced yet another bag of holding. Looking around shiftily, he sat back down on the terracotta soldier and proceeded onward.

The Seventh Patriarch was panting, and his eyes were wide as he watched what was happening. He even began to tremble.

As Meng Hao continued on, he saw a small mountain, which he took!

He saw a little pagoda, which he took!

He saw a bamboo forest, which he took!

He saw a log cabin, which he took!

He saw a carved sculpture, which he took!

Everything that he saw, every location that seemed to house good fortune, was taken away by the giant hands of the terracotta soldier, and then put into a bag of holding.

Meng Hao had a vast collection of bags of holding. When he ran out of big ones, he used small ones. If something was too big, he would dismantle the object into smaller pieces and cram it in.

As he sped along, he looked a bit ill at ease, even embarrassed. Up above, the Seventh Patriarch was trembling, and his beard was in disarray. His eyes shone with disbelief, as if he simply couldn't imagine how such a charming, innocent child... would actually do something like this!

Were it not for the fact that he actually feared the terracotta soldier, the Seventh Patriarch might have instantly slaughtered the treasonous and disgraceful Meng Hao!

"Wha... what is he doing!? He's not contemplating any enlightenment! He's just taking all of the various items created and collected by the past

Patriarchs... and putting them in his bags of holding!!”

This was especially true considering that, at one point, Meng Hao reached a palace. The Patriarch’s jaw dropped as he watched Meng Hao quickly began to dismantle the entire palace, including the floor tiles. He moved with a precision and accuracy that made it seem as if this was something he did on a daily basis.

This finally seemed to provoke a reaction from the ancestral land. Even as he went about dismantling the palace, stripping away even the columns, leaving it completely stark and bare... roaring could be heard from off in the distance as a pack of giant apes flew toward him.

There were more than a hundred of them, and each one had a cultivation base that was similar to the peak of the Immortal realm. Their bodies were covered with thick coats of luxuriant fur, and their eyes glowed bright red. Apparently, they were the palace guards, and their eyes were fixed hatefully on Meng Hao as they charged forward.

When Meng Hao saw the apes, he didn’t have the terracotta soldier attack. Instead, he slapped his bag of holding, causing the parrot to fly out.

It had apparently been stuffed into the bag of holding for too long, because as soon as it emerged, it flew several circles in the air at top speed. The meat jelly was attached to its foot in the shape of a bell, and immediately began to let out nonstop jingling sounds.

“Lord Fifth is out again!!!

“When Lord Fifth appears, who dares to cause strife!!

“Attention, all furred and feathered concubines, Lord Fifth is here to dote upon you!” Almost as soon as the parrot appeared, its eyes suddenly went wide, and it almost forgot to flap its wings. It even began to drool as it stared fixedly at the luxuriantly furred apes.

“So many concubines....” it said, eyes shining excitedly. Suddenly feeling quite hot and bothered, it squawked and then shot toward the charging apes at top speed.

Meng Hao cleared his throat, then flew back up to sit on the terracotta

soldier, which sped off into the distance.

The Seventh Patriarch's eyes went wide as it watched the parrot and the troupe of apes, and he suddenly felt completely nauseous.

It didn't take long before miserable shrieks rang out, seemingly filled with indescribable tragedy.

By that time, Meng Hao had reached a location where the land was black. He saw a huge coffin, atop which was a stone statue of a majestic old man!

Beneath the statue were various offerings of tribute. There were chunks of rare Immortal jade, as well as other objects seldom seen in the outside world. There were high-grade spirit stones, as well as three magical items that emanated shocking auras, and even two dark green bamboo lamps.

As soon as Meng Hao saw the coffin and the statue, his expression turned serious. He dropped to the ground, then clasped hands and bowed deeply to the statue.

"Fang Clan member Fang Hao pays respects to you, Ancestor!"

When the Seventh Patriarch saw Meng Hao acting in this way, his expression softened a bit. However, what Meng Hao said next cause him to almost go blind.

"Ancestor," he said, his tone grave, "I'm not sure which generation Patriarch you are, sir, but... I can't believe the other Fang Clan members behaved so shockingly. How incredible that none of the previous clan members ever exchanged any of these offerings for new ones!"

"Look, sir. These offerings are all dusty! They've clearly been sitting here for far, far too long. Patriarch, don't you worry. I'll help you to switch them out. As a member of the Junior generation, this is something I simply must do."

# Chapter 951: Demon Sealers Appear Again!

Over many generations, clan members who came to this place would prostrate themselves in front of this coffin and statue with the utmost respect. None of them had ever even thought of having designs on the offerings.

Meng Hao was the first.

His expression was somber as, after bowing deeply, he swished his sleeve in a way that made it seem like he was truly and wholeheartedly performing a service for the Patriarch. He walked up to the offerings without the slightest hesitation.

He couldn't help but let out a long sigh when he looked at the fist-sized chunk of Immortal jade.

"Patriarch, those other clan members who came to visit in the past were truly disloyal descendants. I can't believe they let so much dust pile up on this Immortal jade! To leave it sitting here for so many years is really shocking!"

"SHOCKING!" Meng Hao truly seemed angry as he stooped over and picked up the Immortal jade. In that same instant, a powerful aura suddenly shot out from the three magical items enshrined there.

Meng Hao didn't seem to be fazed in the least. He actually ignored the magical items completely. He was the type of person who dared to snatch items directly from that Immortal pavilion in the Ruins of Immortality, so how could he possibly be scared of these three magical items?

He quickly put the large Immortal jade away, and then produced a fingernail-sized piece of Immortal jade to replace it. He carefully placed it onto the tribute dais.

"Patriarch, look, this piece of Immortal jade is sparkling and crystal-clear. It's beautiful and lacks even the slightest speck of dust. Only a piece of Immortal jade like this is befitting of a Patriarch like you." Meng Hao

cleared his throat, then looked toward the other offerings and spirit stones with shining eyes.

It was at this point that the auras of the three magical items exploded out, causing incredible pressure to weigh down on the area.

“Beat it!” roared Meng Hao, glaring at the magical items. “I’m from the Fang Clan, and I have Fang Clan blood in me! If I want to tidy up the Patriarch’s grave by replacing some of the tribute items, then do you magical item spirits dare to stop me?!” The auras emanating from the magical items suddenly stopped in place.

In that instant, Meng Hao employed the fastest speed he could muster to quickly place the items and spirit stones into his bag of holding.

“How shocking! These spirit stones are all covered in dust! As a Junior member of the clan, I simply can’t tolerate such a thing!” He immediately produced some fingernail-sized, low-grade spirit stones which he somberly placed onto the tribute dais.

“Outrageous! They only placed some bamboo lamps in front of this Fang Clan Patriarch’s grave? That won’t do. As a member of the Junior generation, it is my duty to exchange these for iron lamps!” He looked at the two bamboo lamps, which glowed with mysterious light, and licked his lips.

He was just about to grab them when the auras of the three magical items exploded out again, filled with intense killing intent, seemingly incensed. It was as if they felt Meng Hao had committed an offense against morality itself.

Apparently, if Meng Hao dared to touch the bamboo lamps, the three magical items would slay him where he stood.

Meng Hao stopped, then cleared his throat in embarrassment and slowly pulled his hand back.

“What are you getting so excited for?” he said quietly. “It’s not that big a deal! I’m acting in good faith.” He eyed the three magical items covetously, then thought for a moment. Eventually, he gave up on the idea of using

Karma to force a destiny connection with them. After all, this wasn't that Immortal pavilion, in which the items had no connection to a particular master. These three magical items were clearly objects that had belonged to the fallen Patriarch, and the spirits inside of them were charged with protecting this place.

Meng Hao might be greedy, but he had principles.

"Fine then. You're clearly very loyal to the Patriarch. I have to admire that." Sighing deeply, Meng Hao took a few steps back. Face solemn, he clasped hands and bowed low.

Up above in midair, the Seventh Patriarch was now in a rage. Seeing Meng Hao switching out the offerings, and then hearing his words, left the Seventh Patriarch stamping with fury.

"How could the Fang Clan bloodline possibly produce such a shameless scoundrel!" he said through gritted teeth. Then he saw Meng Hao clasp hands and bow, and couldn't help but gape again. Sensing Meng Hao's sincerity, he looked on silently for a moment, and finally, his gaze softened. From the look of things, Meng Hao wasn't completely beyond redemption.

"Let's see what this little hoodlum is actually like deep down, and what sort of waves he can make in this place!" After a moment, he looked off into the distance with a wistful expression.

"The ancestral land is divided into six main areas," he murmured. "The Dao Guardsman, the Field of Magic Enlightenment, the Quasi-Dao Patriarch Tombs, the Nine Nethermountains, the Ancient Burial Ground, and the Misty Heaven Vault!

"Those six areas are essentially arranged in a straight line. The further one goes along, the more danger they will face. However, the good fortune... also increases!

"This particular tomb lies on the border between the Field of Magic Enlightenment and the Quasi-Dao Patriarch Tombs.

"From ancient times until now, the Nine Nethermountains have been

the farthest that most clan members can make it into the ancestral land. It would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to find someone who could reach the Ancient Burial Ground. As far as the necropolis in the Misty Heaven Vault, not even Eldest Brother, an almighty Dao Realm expert, was destined to enter it.

"The reason, of course, is that at the end of the Ancient Burial Ground, there is no path.

"The necropolis of the first generation Patriarch is located somewhere inside the Misty Heaven Vault, along with his most powerful magical technique... the One Thought Stellar Transformation!" Finally he closed his eyes.it

He had never actually laid eyes on the first generation Patriarch. The only person who actually had was the old man in the stony cavern that the Seventh Patriarch referred to as Eldest Brother.

The other six people in that cavern had been born in different generations. However, after extinguishing ten Soul Lamps, matters of seniority weren't important, and because of the bloodlines that connected them all, they called each other Brother.

"The clan has experienced three catastrophes...." said the Seventh Patriarch, sighing. Because of those three catastrophes, the small group in the stony cavern were the only cultivators in the entire clan who had extinguished more than ten Soul Lamps.

In the moment that the Seventh Patriarch sighed, Meng Hao finished bowing to the stone statue, and then sped away on the terracotta soldier.

Meanwhile, something was happening that even the Seventh Patriarch didn't notice. As Meng Hao made his way through the Quasi-Dao Patriarch Tombs, taking anything he saw that appeared to be valuable, an aura was slowly building up in the ancestral land, an aura that had never appeared there before.

The aura had actually first appeared when the terracotta soldier had caused the mountains to crumble, and then flew up into the air. When the statue then picked up all of the boulders that contained enlightenment of

Daoist magics and divine abilities, the aura had grown even stronger.

Gradually, a very thin mist was building up over the lands.

Time passed. Meng Hao sat atop the terracotta soldier as it proceeded forward. As he traveled, he continued to encounter enormous tombs. Strangely, these tombs had no tombstones or writing on them whatsoever.

Meng Hao could only speculate based on what the Grand Elder had told him that this was the location where the Dao Realm Patriarchs were buried.

However, he didn't know their names, so he found the nameless tombs to be somewhat odd. It was as if they had intentionally come here before perishing, and didn't want anyone to know who they were.

"Weird...." thought Meng Hao. However, this didn't stop him from carrying out his duty to tend to the tombs, and help the Patriarchs exchange their various offerings.

As Meng Hao swept the tombs of the Quasi-Dao Patriarchs clean, the Seventh Patriarch up above was finding it much harder to contain his wrath.

The only reason he could maintain his temper was that Meng Hao always respectfully bowed to the grave upon arriving and departing, and didn't touch the tombs themselves.

A few days later, Meng Hao descended from above once again. This time, the sight of the coffin and statue caused his eyes to widen. He stopped in place and looked at the statue and the tombstone in front of it.

Up to this point, he had encountered seven tombs. None of those seven tombs had any writing to explain who was buried there, but the tomb he was in front of now did have a name!

Fang Pinqi!

The name was written in calligraphy that was as bold and flamboyant as dancing dragons and phoenixes, and emanated a boundless aura. Beneath the name was the Patriarch's life story.

Meng Hao read over the life story of the Patriarch named Fang Pinqi, and it caused rumbling sounds to fill his mind.

The story described Fang Pinqi's life from the moment he started practicing cultivation. When he stepped into the Immortal Realm, he was the foremost true Immortal of his generation. His path was always that of a Chosen, and was viewed as a blazing sun by the clan. When he entered the Ancient Realm, he summoned fifteen Soul Lamps.

He performed countless meritorious deeds for the sect, and even forged new paths in the Ruins of Immortality. He became the most outstanding member of his generation, and successfully accomplished the deadly task of extinguishing fourteen Soul Lamps, eventually becoming the Patriarch of his generation. In the end, despite having extinguished the final Soul Lamp, he failed to break into the Dao Realm, and became a Quasi-Dao Paragon.

However, he did not go mad like most others did, becoming evil and committing heinous acts. Instead, he maintained a tranquil heart, and lived out his final fifty years of life in peace.

During those fifty years, he still worked hard for the clan before finally closing his eyes and passing away into meditation.

That was why this tomb was inscribed with his name and story. It also contained a vivid introduction of the Quasi-Dao Realm, as well a clear description of how terrifying it was.

By the time Meng Hao finished reading the story, he was panting. Now, he understood the meaning of the term 'Quasi-Dao Paragon'.

He thought back to the ancient Demon Immortal Sect, and how Ke Yunhai had passed away in meditation. He also thought about Ke Yunhai's description of what it meant to be at the peak of the Ancient Realm.

"So, it turns out that between the peak of the Ancient Realm and the true Dao Realm, there is another realm called the Quasi-Dao Realm. In that Realm, one's longevity collapses, leading to certain death. As such, people go mad, and are called Paragons by others as a form of respect. It's almost as if people think using such a title will prevent those people from

going fully mad.” He looked at the stone tablet for a moment, and then refrained from even touching any of the offerings. Instead he clasped hands and bowed deeply.

After a moment, he left. It took a few more days to finish passing through the tombs of the Quasi-Dao Patriarchs. There were eleven of them in total, only three of which bore inscriptions.

They all had different experiences, but similar endings. The inscriptions were almost like a book of comfort written for the clan, instructing them about that Realm between the Ancient Realm and the Dao Realm. The people in that realm, the Quasi-Dao Paragons, either went mad and performed horrific deeds, or were worshiped in veneration for generations to come.

“The Dao Realm....” After passing the last tomb, Meng Hao stood there and looked back thoughtfully. “The path of cultivation is one of grave danger. Life or death crises present themselves at every step. Very few people... can make it to the very end.” Meng Hao sighed, then clasped hands and bowed to the tombs of all the Quasi-Dao Patriarchs.

Just as he straightened up to leave, he felt something vibrating in his bag of holding. It was the ancient Demon Sealing Jade, which had remained silent for such a long time. The intensity of the vibration even exceeded the time when he had encountered the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer!

At the same time, Meng Hao suddenly felt an intense sensation that he was being summoned, coming from deep within the ancestral land.

“How could the League of Demon Sealers be buried in the Mountains and Seas? They tread the path of Dao Tribulation of the Nine Mountains and Seas. If they succeed... then the Mountain and Sea Realm... will return to the League of Demon Sealers!”

After hearing this, Meng Hao instantly began to tremble.

# Chapter 952: Nine Nethermountains

"So, there are clues about the League of Demon Sealers here!!" Meng Hao's mind spun; he almost couldn't believe that the League of Demon Sealers was somehow connected to the Fang Clan ancestral land.

"Return.... That voice just now said the word 'return'!!" Meng Hao began to breathe heavily as the ancient voice of the Demon Sealing Jade faded away. However, the summons that came from deeper within the ancestral land only continued to grow stronger.

That summons was the type he felt when encountering another cultivator from the League, and it was something that only other members of the League of Demon Sealers would be able to feel in this place.

Suddenly, a new voice could be heard echoing in Meng Hao's ears. This voice was not ancient, but rather, sounded like that of a young man.

"The Nine Demon Sealing Hexes. The Mountain and Sea Realm. The Nine Hexes united as One. A concept unknown in all the skies...."

Meng Hao's heart began to pound uncontrollably, and the aura around him suddenly changed. It was as if countless streams of Demonic qi were shooting toward him, accompanied by the roars of innumerable Greater Demons.

After a while, the voice faded away, but Meng Hao could feel the summons growing stronger.

Panting, he eventually turned and looked further into the depths of the ancestral land. Far off in the distance, he could just barely make out nine enormous mountains.

The summons was coming... from somewhere beyond those nine mountains!

Meng Hao's eyes flickered as he thought about the similar summons he had felt in the Ruins of Immortality, and he felt somewhat unsettled. There was far too much about the League of Demon Sealers that he didn't understand. As the Ninth Generation Demon Sealer, he wanted to know...

what was the actual origin and purpose of the League of Demon Sealers!

He thought back to what the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer had told him, and about the terrifying events in the Ruins of Immortality that had led to him being named 13th in the Echelon by the white-robed woman. There was something very strange about how that woman had looked at him.

Meng Hao would never be able to forget that.

He had the feeling that the League of Demon Sealers... was wrapped up in some Heaven-shaking, world-shattering secret, something that defied description, a secret that was connected to all of the Nine Mountains and Seas.

After standing there silently for a bit, Meng Hao managed to settle his thoughts. His eyes shone with determination and he gazed deeply in the direction of the summons. Finally, he turned and once again bowed deeply to all of the ancestral tombs behind him.

Up in midair, the Seventh Patriarch could not hear the call or feel the summons, nor could he sense the Demonic qi that swirled around Meng Hao. However, he could tell that something strange had just happened, and despite being unable to see what it was, it left him feeling shocked.

“The aura just now on this member of the Junior generation....” A profound gleam appeared in his eyes. As time progressed, the Seventh Patriarch continued to be filled with the sensation that Meng Hao was a person of deep secrets, secrets that he himself could not see through.

As Meng Hao made his way off into the distance, the Seventh Patriarch looked back at the Quasi-Dao Patriarch Tombs, and let out a soft sigh.

“All he did was switch out some offerings. He didn’t disturb the tombs themselves, and even bowed in formal greeting. And he didn’t touch any of the items from the tombs with inscriptions.... He might be a bit greedy, but he has a good heart, and knows how to keep himself in line....

“One day, when the time comes for me to extinguish my final Soul Lamp, if I fail.... I wonder if I will be able to preserve my Dao heart. After I

perish and am laid to rest here in the Quasi-Dao Patriarch Tombs, I wonder if they will erect a tombstone for me....” The Seventh Patriarch was well aware that the entire purpose of the Quasi-Dao Patriarch Tombs was to ensure that members of the Junior generation would clearly understand the madness of the Quasi-Dao Realm. It was to serve as a warning to any of them who had the chance to attempt to step into the Dao Realm!

After leaving the Quasi-Dao Patriarch Tombs, Meng Hao sat atop the terracotta soldier, which whistled through the air at top speed. Occasionally, motes of light would pulse out from the terracotta soldier and then melt into the surrounding air. Moments later, they would reappear and return to it, almost as if it were breathing.

It was something Meng Hao had just noticed as he controlled the terracotta soldier’s movements.

As he proceeded along, the feeling of the summons would occasionally get more intense, and at other times would fade. Meng Hao’s eyes flickered, although his facial expression remained unchanged. Inwardly, he remained as vigilant as ever.

Due to everything that had happened with the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer, he currently felt proverbial alarm bells going off in his head.

As he continued forward, Meng Hao scoured the lands below for possible good fortune, and also spent some time observing the terracotta soldier. He soon realized that it had some sort of strange connection with the ancestral land.

It was as if a resonance existed between them.

This realization caused certain speculations to form in his heart. After a while, he sighed, and looked at the terracotta soldier, thinking about how he didn’t wish to part ways with it in the future.

Days later, Meng Hao’s mood gradually stabilized. The summons continued to tug at him, but he had grown used to it and ignored it. Instead of following the pull, he did his best to scrape the area clean of any good fortune.

The more things he acquired, the wider his smile grew.

Eventually, the land in front of Meng Hao turned crimson in color, and he saw nine mountains.

The Nine Nethermountains!

This was the fourth region in the Fang Clan's ancestral land, and could be considered the depths of the lands. From ancient times until now, most people could not get past the Nine Nethermountains and into the Ancient Burial Ground.

Nine mountains towered up into the sky, and when you looked at them, it seemed almost impossible to see their tops, as if they connected the ground and the sky.

Roaring sounds could be heard drifting out occasionally from the nine mountains. They were sounds miserable and savage, shocking to the extreme.

There were many dangerous areas here, and many aspects that could easily kill you. Such fatal aspects came in the form of various beasts, as well as from the nine mountains themselves.

A thick aura of death filled the area, and from a distance, Meng Hao could see layers of gray mist swirling around the mountains. Because of the gray mists, the entire area was blurry and difficult to see clearly.

About the time that he neared the Nine Nethermountains, the parrot and the meat jelly caught up with him. Many of the parrot's feathers were missing, and it looked disheveled and out of sorts. However, its expression was one of extreme satisfaction.

As it flew over, it didn't even wait for Meng Hao to call out to it before it looked over at the nine mountains, heard the roaring coming from within them, and suddenly shivered. Looking extremely excited, it let out a few piercing squawks and then sped toward the mountains, brimming with energy. The meat jelly bell jingled the whole time.

"You can't do this! It's wrong! It's immoral! It's shameless! I'm going to convert you...." The echo of the meat jelly's garrulous chatter rang out

from off in the distance.

Meng Hao glanced at the parrot for a moment and then ignored it completely. This place might be full of dangers, but the parrot and the meat jelly were capable enough, and would be very difficult to kill.

In front of the Nine Nethermountains, a stone stele rose up roughly three thousand meters tall. It emanated an archaic aura that seemed to indicate that it had existed for many, many years.

There were three lines of text on the stele.

“Nine Nethermountains, filled with endless treasures. Each one of these mountains is filled with endless opportunities. Any who challenge the mountains will have the chance to get good fortune and divine abilities!

“They are a deadly trial by fire. For those under the Immortal Realm, half a mountain is your limit. For those under the Ancient Realm, you will be able to proceed through three mountains. If you can pass through all nine mountains, you can acquire the secret magic of the Nethermoon!

“Fang Clan descendants can use their bloodline to open the path through the mountains. Whether you live or die is up to fate!”

The words were not attributed to any person in particular, but they seemed to be filled with an intense pressure, indicating that any person who entered this place would be facing grave danger.

Meng Hao looked at the nine mountains, and an odd expression could be seen on his face. Gradually, his eyes began to shine, and he licked his lips. He glanced down at the terracotta soldier, which then began to shrink rapidly. In the blink of an eye, it was only about three meters tall.

“This ancestral land really is a Blessed Land for me!” To other clan members, it was a place of extreme danger. To him, though, these weren’t nine dangerous mountains, they were nine treasure mountains.

He slapped his bag of holding, producing the bloodline jade slip. After scanning it with divine sense, he smiled.

The seven Ancient Realm Elders had all scattered in different directions.

One of them was inside of the Nine Nethermountains. Obviously, he had tried to acquire some of the good fortune therein, but had ended up trapped and unable to extricate himself.

"Well, no need to get anxious. Just wait for me to track you down." Meng Hao's eyes began to shine brightly, and he cleared his throat. Immediately, the terracotta soldier began to walk forward into the mountains.

Meng Hao quickly flew up to sit on the statue's shoulder as it began to charge forward.

"Challenge one mountain at a time, and then clear all nine of them of treasure...." These thoughts immediately filled him with excitement.

As the terracotta soldier sped along, the Seventh Patriarch sighed and looked on helplessly. When he saw the light shining in Meng Hao's eyes, he began to murmur to himself.

"To him, these really are treasure mountains. The little scoundrel has the Dao Guardsman to protect him, leaving him free to do whatever he wants!"

"Now that I think about it, if I had the Dao Guardsman to protect me when I came here for the first time, how could I possibly have left any of the treasures in these mountains to be passed on to anyone else?" There was nothing he could do, so the Seventh Patriarch calmed himself, looked at Meng Hao charging into the mountains with the terracotta soldier, and sighed.

Time passed. Meng Hao sat on the terracotta soldier's shoulder, which wielded its greatsword the entire way as they charged into the first mountain. When they encountered restrictive spells, they would simply break through them. When they encountered beasts, they would put them down. When they encountered obstacles, they would smash them to pieces.

Nothing could stand in their way and nothing could stop them!

Things weren't thrown into absolute chaos, but suffice to say, the first mountain was filled with miserable shrieks and roars.

"Whoah! That boulder actually has a carving of a magical technique! Pretty nice! I'm taking it!"

"Who could be so immoral as to leave a bunch of Immortal jade laying around in this place! I'm taking it!"

"So many spirit stones.... Hey, slow down, Onyx! Let me pick these things up, then we can keep going!"

Meng Hao's eyes continued to grow brighter, and he quivered with excitement. He had collected quite a bit of Immortal jade and spirit stones so far, as well as a good collection of magical items. A deafening roar could be heard as he neared the mountain's peak, heralding the approach of a two-headed giant.

The giant held an enormous cudgel in its hand, and was clearly the mountain's boss, tasked with guarding the mountain peak. When it leapt out, roaring, the terracotta soldier's aura surged.

The surging aura caused the previously overbearing two-headed giant to shiver, and immediately cease roaring. It stared blankly at Meng Hao, then at the terracotta soldier he was standing on, and cold sweat began to drip down its two foreheads.

After looking at them for the space of two breaths, the two-headed giant let out a plaintive shriek, then turned and fled back inside the mountain, vanishing without a trace.

# Chapter 953: Getting the Hang of the Sixth Hex

Meng Hao looked around proudly as the terracotta soldier set foot on the peak of the mountain. From here, he could see an enormous cliff, upon which was carved a half moon.

Meng Hao's eyes widened as the same image of a half moon suddenly appeared in his mind.

He couldn't take the stone cliff away, nor could he duplicate or reproduce it physically. It seemed that the only thing he could do was to look at it. That said, a single glance would completely engrave the image inside of him. However, Meng Hao could also tell that the image would only last for nine days.

Nine days later, the image of the half moon would fade, and he would be unable to remember it.

"This is the Nethermoon...? So, I guess I need to gaze upon all nine mountains within nine days, huh?" Meng Hao smiled. To others, this would have been difficult, but to him, accomplishing such a task would be quite simple.

"This place really is a Blessed Land." He sighed, then patted the terracotta soldier, causing it to fly down the first mountain and head toward the second.

From the time the Nine Nethermountains had been created by the first generation Patriarch years ago until now, something like this had never happened. As Meng Hao proceeded forward, anything that was available for the taking was placed into a bag of holding.

All obstacles, all beasts, were like dried weeds that he could crush without any effort....

Even the mountaintop bosses would cower in hiding as soon as they saw the terracotta soldier. Meng Hao was allowed to easily pass through the second mountain, and then the third....

He acquired so many legacies and magical techniques that he lost track of how many there were. Nor did he have time to keep them organized. As long as he had an available bag of holding, he would throw his acquisitions inside.

“Blessed Land!

“Once I get out of here, I might be able to trade these things for even better stuff in the clan!” Meng Hao was only continuing to get more and more excited. For the first time in this place, he was beginning to experience the sensation of being rich.

The feeling fueled his excitement, and he quickly sped onward through the fourth and fifth mountains.

At the cliff on top of each mountain was an image of a half moon. Each time Meng Hao looked at the image, the imprint of the half moon inside of him grew clearer. Gradually, an increasingly powerful pressure began to emanate out from the imprinted image in his mind.

Time passed. By the time the third day had gone by, he was at the eighth mountain.

Meanwhile, a black-robed old man stood at a position near the top of the eighth mountain, stuck in a spell formation, looking with alarm at a certain jade slip. For the past three days, he had been observing the jade slip continuously, and could clearly see the dot of light that represented Meng Hao getting closer and closer to his own position within the Nine Nethermountains.

When he saw Meng Hao choose to start at the first mountain, he sighed with relief, and even laughed coldly. In his mind, Meng Hao most likely didn’t dare to select the mountain that he himself was on. This caused him to consider chasing after Meng Hao after all.

However, his new idea was quickly shattered to pieces when he saw, to his astonishment, that Meng Hao actually... passed through the entire first mountain in only a few hours.

After that, it took him just three days to go from the first mountain all

the way to the eighth mountain, upon which he stood. This scene caused his scalp to tingle so much it seemed about to explode. His mind buzzed, and he began to get jittery from fear. He wished he could simply leave the mountain and flee.

He had no idea how Meng Hao was doing what he was doing. But actually, that wasn't important. By this point, he was certain that if he ended up meeting Meng Hao, he would more than likely end up dead.

"What do I do? What do I do...?" The black-robed old man looked at the jade slip, and the dot of light that represented Meng Hao. It was now heading toward him with terrifying speed, causing the old man to begin to pant with alarm.

After several hours passed... he could see Meng Hao, barreling toward him from further down on the mountain. Then he saw... the terracotta soldier Meng Hao was sitting on. The old man let out a cry of alarm.

"That's the aura of a Quasi-Dao Paragon!!

"This... this...." As soon as the old man saw the statue, he understood everything. Then he realized that the statue looked very familiar, and it only took a moment for him to realize what it was. At that point, his legs suddenly grew weak, and the shadow of death spread out across his entire body.

He began to pant as hundreds of thoughts ran through his mind. After a breath of time passed, Meng Hao and the terracotta soldier were closing in. The old man took a deep breath, then, expression somber, clasped hands and bowed deeply toward Meng Hao.

"I am Fang Daohong!" he gushed. "Greetings, Prince Hao! 1

"Prince, you must be quite shocked to run into me here. That contemptible and shameless Fang Xiushan made a lot of promises to me to convince me to come here and kill you, honorable prince. However, Fang Xiushan was unaware that I am actually upright and not given to flattery, and have always admired the exalted Fang Xiufeng! How could I possibly give aid to a villain like Fang Xiushan?!"

"Therefore, I accepted Fang Xiushan's proposal. However, my true goal was to come here and protect you, Prince! Prince Hao... um, you know, when you were small, I actually held you in my arms...."

Even as Fang Daohong spoke, the terracotta soldier came to a stop directly in front of him. It was nine meters tall, not gigantic, and yet it emanated a certain pressure, as well as a Quasi-Dao aura, that caused the old man to tremble. He swallowed hard, then forced a smile onto his face, trying to make himself look as harmless as possible.

Meng Hao sat on the terracotta soldier, looking down at Fang Daohong.

"You held me when I was a baby?" Meng Hao asked calmly.

"Yeah, that's right!" he replied, nodding his head vigorously. "Prince Hao, I really did hold you in my arms. You were so cute when you were small! And now you've grown up to be so handsome...." This old man was not the type to speak flattering words, but in this situation, he didn't hesitate at all.

Meng Hao looked at the old man thoughtfully for a moment, then nodded.

"Fine. Since that's the case, drop your cultivation base to the Immortal Realm. I'm going to hex you with a restrictive spell. From now on, you'll be following my orders."

Fang Daohong was shocked to hear Meng Hao's words. However, the terracotta soldier's aura exploded out before he could refuse. It was like a mountain crushing down on Fang Daohong, and he was filled with a sense of deadly crisis that caused him to grow ashen, and sweat to pour down his face.

Inwardly, he was cursing Fang Xiushan to death. His hatred for Fang Xiushan had reached an indescribable level, and he was also filled with deep and profound regret.

Then he saw the cold gleam in Meng Hao's eyes, and his heart seized. After a moment of silence, he let out a long sigh, unhesitatingly lifted his right hand up, and then smacked it down onto his chest.

Blood sprayed out of his mouth as many of his qi passageways were shattered, and his cultivation base dropped from having one extinguished Soul Lamp, down to the peak of the Immortal Realm.

Meng Hao did not seem to be moved by this action. With the terracotta soldier present, there was no question that Fang Daohong would agree to Meng Hao's requirement. However, if Meng Hao didn't have the terracotta soldier to protect him, there was no doubt in his mind that the old man's face would be as cold as ice, and he would slaughter him where he stood.

Meng Hao did not show pity to enemies; sparing the man's life was more than enough kindness.

When he saw Fang Daohong's cultivation base drop, Meng Hao extended his right hand and unleashed the Sixth Demon Sealing Hex. Instantly, streams of black and white qi began to swirl around his hand. The two streams of qi illuminated his face with flickering black and white, making him look extremely bizarre.

Fang Daohong's scalp went numb; the black and white qi left him trembling with fear.

He hesitated for a moment and then asked, "Prince Hao... what... what is that restrictive spell?"

"Oh, it's a hexing spell I learned a few days ago," Meng Hao replied, glancing at Fang Daohong. "I'm still getting used to it, but don't worry. This is the first time I'm really confident that I can succeed. In fact, if you lower your cultivation base a bit more, there's a much higher chance of success."

Fang Daohong's face fell.

"You learned it a few days ago? Still not used to it? This is the first time you've felt confident in using it?" More beads of sweat popped out on the old man's face. He was getting the increasing feeling that these two streams of black and white qi could suck his soul away. He even had the premonition that if the hexing failed, he would most likely die an agonizing death.

He watched as Meng Hao pointed at him, whereupon Fang Daohong threw his hands up in front of him and cried out.

“Wait, hold on....” He began to step backward, but then, the terracotta soldier raised its greatsword, which radiated killing intent. Fang Daohong immediately stopped in place.

His face was pale white as he clenched his jaw and then slapped his chest several times in quick succession. He coughed up several mouthfuls of blood. The severe self-inflicted injury caused his cultivation base to drop from the Immortal Realm down to something equivalent to the Dao Seeking stage. At that point, he stopped, looking up at Meng Hao with an ashen face and a bitter smile.

His sudden action caused Meng Hao to look at him closely for a moment, then point out with his right finger again. Immediately, the black and white streams of qi shot through the air and burrowed into Fang Daohong’s body. He trembled, fell to the ground, and began to shriek miserably. At the same time, gray magical symbols began to appear on his skin, where they circulated back and forth. Apparently, these magical symbols grew up from inside his body and manifested on his skin.

Meng Hao stared closely at Fang Daohong. This time, he had used a slightly different method to utilize the Sixth Hex. If this method didn’t work, then he would have to attempt some other way.

Time passed. Fang Daohong’s shrieks eventually grew weaker. After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, he suddenly went very stiff, and all of the magical symbols faded away. The only thing left behind was a new magical symbol, on his forehead. That magical symbol then made a popping sound as it flew out from his forehead and merged into Meng Hao.

When that happened, Meng Hao could sense a warm current flowing within him. At the same time, the image of a tiny person appeared in his mind, a tiny person whose physical appearance was exactly the same as Fang Daohong.

“Did it work?” thought Meng Hao, looking a bit shocked. After so many

times trying out the technique, this seemed like his first success.

Fang Daohong stared in shock for a moment, then crawled to his feet. The overwhelming pain he had experienced moments ago was now gone. He blinked a few times, then moved his arms and legs a bit. He didn't feel the least bit different than before.

"Prince, you... you succeeded?" he asked tentatively.

Meng Hao frowned as he studied the tiny figure within his mind. Heart thumping, he imagined smacking the tiny figure with his palm. As soon as he did, Fang Daohong let out a shriek. It was as if some enormous, invisible hand had just smacked him; blood sprayed from his mouth, and he was knocked to the ground. After struggling back to his feet, he looked around in confusion.

Meng Hao's eyes began to shine as he imagined the old man being struck by lightning.

Nothing visible happened, and yet, Fang Daohong screamed as if he were being struck by lightning.

Meng Hao's eyes shone even brighter as he imagined the old man being burned, drowned, trampled, crushed by a mountain....

Fang Daohong shrieked miserably as he felt his hair burning, his body being submerged in water, his muscles bruised, and, in the end, he lay pinned on the ground as if he were being crushed by some gigantic object. All of these things caused him to look at Meng Hao with terror. He knew of all sorts of hexing magics and restrictive spells, but he had never heard of anything as unbelievably terrifying as this.

He suddenly had the sensation... the Meng Hao was going to toy with him until he died.

"So, this is the Sixth Hex, huh.... The Life-Death Hex... is absolute control." He took a deep breath and then smiled.

His smile caused Fang Daohong to shudder. The sense of humiliation he felt at that moment was intense, and that caused his hatred of Fang Xiushan to seep down into his bones!

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1. Fang Daohong's name in Chinese is 方道宏 fāng dào hóng. Dao is the same as "the Dao," which could also mean "path" or "way." Hong means "grand" or "magnificent".

# Chapter 954: Sun and Moon in the Nine Nethermountains!

The Eighth Hex was the hexing of the body, and could even be called Bodily Cultivation Hexing!

The Seventh Hex was Karmic Hexing!

The Sixth Hex was Life-Death Hexing!

The three Demon Sealing Hexes that Meng Hao had learned spun in his mind. Each Hex had its own unique features, and each could be considered a powerful secret magic!

The League of Demon Sealers was terrifying, and as of this moment Meng Hao could say that he had experienced it personally. In fact, he got the feeling that it was very likely the Ji Clan's Karmic Severing had actually been created by imitating the Seventh Hex.

"I wonder what type of hexing magic... the Fifth Hex is!?" Meng Hao's eyes glittered, and he took a deep breath. Ignoring Fang Daohong, he sent some divine will into the terracotta soldier, causing it to leap into the air and head toward the mountain peak. As for the spell formation that Fang Daohong was trapped in, the terracotta soldier shattered it casually.

When Fang Daohong saw that happen, he trembled inwardly, and suddenly realized that the decision he had just made was definitely the correct one. Without any hesitation, he began to follow Meng Hao.

After reaching the mountain peak, Meng Hao saw the half moon carved into the cliff face, and once again, the image imprinted in his mind grew clearer. Furthermore, the image of a half moon was now visible on his forehead.

"Nethermoon secret magic!" gasped Fang Daohong. Suddenly, he recalled how Meng Hao had charged through the seven other mountains, and then, his eyes began to fill with envy.

"Is the Nethermoon Magic powerful?" Meng Hao asked.

Fang Daohong immediately began to explain: "The first generation Patriarch left behind five great Daoist Magics and three secret magics. The Nethermoon Magic is one of those three great secret magics."

"The Nethermoon Magic becomes more destructive the higher your cultivation base gets. It can alter the sun and the moon, and can unleash power exponentially greater than your cultivation base. It's an excellent trump card in battle!"

"Back in the clan, the only way to get the Nethermoon secret magic is to pay a huge amount of merit points. In fact... there are only a handful of people in the entire clan who have mastered it!" The look of envy in his eyes was becoming more and more obvious.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and he chuckled. He looked over at the ninth Nethermountain with anticipation. The terracotta soldier then began to speed toward the ninth mountain, with Fang Daohong flying close behind.

Fang Daohong panted the entire way. Finally, he understood how Meng Hao had been able to move so quickly from the first mountain all the way to the eighth. The clan's Dao Guardsman could sweep through anything and everything; it didn't matter what appeared up ahead, it was easily crushed.

Several hours later, Meng Hao reached the ninth Nethermountain. What he saw was a large group of luxuriantly furred beasts. They were in miserable condition, and their eyes were bright red as they chased the parrot.

The Parrot soared through the air, occasionally letting out a mighty squawk. It appeared to be incredibly excited, and every so often it would transform into a colorful beam of light that shot back into the group of beasts. When it emerged, it appeared to be incredibly satisfied, and would let out loud whoops of triumph.

The parrot's enthusiastic demeanor caused Meng Hao to feel a bit bad for the beasts of this ninth mountain. However, considering that the parrot had essentially cleared the mountain of beasts, Meng Hao was able to proceed through it very smoothly.

At the peak of the mountain was the final cliff, and the final image of the half moon, which caused Meng Hao's mind to tremble.

The half moon on his forehead glittered brightly and then faded away. However, even though it wasn't visible, the half moon seemed to be eternally imprinted into his memory. Flashes of enlightenment also appeared in his mind.

After some time passed, Meng Hao opened his eyes, and his aura seemed different than before. He lifted his left hand up, and the half moon appeared on his forehead. At the same time, a black half moon floated above his palm.

The sudden appearance of the moon caused an emotional look to appear on Fang Daohong's face. However, moments later, his eyes went wide when he suddenly saw... a sphere of light also appear above Meng Hao's hand.

The sphere was white, and looked like a sun. Its light reflected off of the black surface of the moon as the two of them circulated around each other above his palm. Black and white. The sun and the moon. At this moment, they let off a shocking pressure.

Even Fang Daohong could feel it, and was astonished.

"A unified magical technique," he thought. "I can't believe that he actually combined two magical techniques. Only people who have extinguished multiple Soul Lamps, who can grasp Essence transformations, and who have the image of a great Dao within them, could possibly combine magical techniques and create such powerful transformations. And yet he... he actually combined them! He isn't even in the Immortal Realm! How can he have the image of a great Dao in his heart?"

Fang Daohong almost couldn't believe it. To create a combination of magical techniques in this way was a very complicated matter, and even he didn't understand much about it. All he did know was that it had something to do with the image of a great Dao, as well as the legendary Essence.

Meng Hao looked at the sun and the moon floating above his hand, and muttered to himself thoughtfully. It was at this point that suddenly, a tiny mountain appeared next to the sun and the moon.

This was none other than the projection of the Ninth Mountain, which Meng Hao had seen during his dreamlike voyage on the boat that year.

The image of the Ninth Mountain might seem incredibly powerful, but actually, it was already too weak to be useful to Meng Hao in his current state. However, its appearance now seemed to be in accord with some sort of natural law. As the sun and the moon rotated around it, it surged with even greater energy than before.

The powerful energy caused Fang Daohong to gasp, and his face to flicker.

"Th-th-that's another sequential combination! What kind of monster is this kid!? Even with such a low cultivation base, he managed to perform two combinations of magical techniques!! How many images of great Daos does he have...?" Fang Daohong took a deep breath. He knew that images of great Daos required mysterious enlightenment. Even he, who was in the Ancient Realm, had only ever had a single great Dao appear within him. And yet, he had just personally witnessed one great Dao image after another appear in Meng Hao's hand. It was unbelievable.

Even more shocking to him was the threatening feeling he got when he looked at the Ninth Mountain and the sun and moon!!

Fang Daohong was panting, and he looked on with wide eyes. However, it was at this point that a thoughtful expression appeared on Meng Hao's face, causing Fang Daohong's heart to start pounding.

"Could it be... that he... he's going to... make a third consecutive magical technique combination!?" The mere idea of this virtually blew Fang Daohong's mind.

Even as the thought entered his mind, two pearls appeared outside of the Ninth Mountain and the sun and moon. The pearls were black and white, and they began to circulate noiselessly around the Ninth Mountain and the sun and moon.

The Ninth mountain was in the center, around which rotated the sun and moon, with the two pearls orbiting in an outer ring. They didn't interfere with each other, and in fact rotated in harmony, creating a resplendent image.

An even more incredibly powerful aura then exploded out.

It only lasted for the space of a single breath before the Black White pearls faded away, the Ninth Mountain collapsed, and the sun and moon went dark. Meng Hao frowned and muttered to himself for a moment.

He didn't notice the terrified expression on Fang Daohong's face, who stood off to the side, jaw hanging and mind spinning.

"Three combinations... he really did it three times...."

Moments ago, the aura he had felt had filled him with complete astonishment. He was an Ancient Realm expert, and yet was astonished by the magical technique of a cultivator who wasn't even in the Immortal Realm yet. Such a thing was completely unheard-of!

"He still isn't a true Immortal, but he will be soon.... Once he's a true Immortal, how many meridians will he open? I'd say 90 at the least!" As Fang Daohong looked at Meng Hao, he suddenly realized why Fang Xiushan had spared no cost in trying to have Meng Hao killed.

"He's not even human...."

Meng Hao was just about to make another attempt when suddenly, the summons from the League of Demon Sealers flared inside of him with incredible intensity.

He dropped his hand and looked out from his position on the peak of the ninth Nethermountain.

From where he was standing, he could see a vast region that stretched out below the mountain in front of him. The ground was pitch black, and the sky seemed to be split in two; everywhere else it was the middle of day, but this one region lay in the darkness of night.

The area where it was night was actually the center of the region of

black earth. Sitting there cross-legged was a young man with a pale face and a head of long hair which floated around him. He wore a long robe, and was surrounded by innumerable corpses whose faces were twisted and distorted, as if they had experienced indescribable suffering before they had died.

There were men and women, and there were cultivators. Some of them had the bodies of beasts, and there were some with even stranger appearances, sinister and malevolent, things that didn't seem to be creatures from the Nine Mountains and Seas.

The corpses were dressed in ancient garments, clothing that reminded Meng Hao of the garb worn by the people in his visions back in the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple!

He had seen things just like this in his vision of the massive Heavenly war in which nine suns and nine butterflies had appeared! 1

A sense of extreme ancientness emanated out from the young man, and the area around him was filled with illusory rifts that almost looked like huge mouths that occasionally opened and closed. From the look of it, there were roughly 100,000 such rifts.

The young man was completely encircled by the rifts. As Meng Hao looked over at him, the young man looked back, and a gleam of anticipation could be seen in his eyes.

"Come...." he said, his voice soft. It seemed to be transmitted to Meng Hao through the air, floating from the depths of time, boring into his ears.

A tremor ran through him. He blinked, and when he opened his eyes, the entire area up ahead was empty. There was nothing there except the rifts in the air; not even the shadow of a person was visible.

It was as if everything Meng Hao had just seen had been an illusion!

The only noteworthy thing that he could see was an enormous stone stele, standing right in the middle of the region of night. Although it was very far away, Meng Hao could still sense the stele's majestic aura, and could also clearly see... that it seethed with Demonic qi!

The reason that this region was different was due to the influence of this dense Demonic qi , which ensured that it was a land of perpetual night.

Meng Hao stood there silently for a moment, then looked over to make sure that Fang Daohong had not been able to see the images he had just seen. He continued to stand there in contemplation for the time it takes half an incense stick to burn before a look of determination appeared in his eyes.

Without any further hesitation, he sent out a stream of divine will. The terracotta soldier's eyes gleamed as he carried Meng Hao forward. Rumbling filled the air as it transformed into a shooting star that sped forward at top speed.

Fang Daohong followed along as they proceeded forward.

Several hours later, the region of night was getting closer. Meng Hao could clearly see the area filled with the 100,000 rifts up ahead. He stood at the border of the entire region, and it felt like he was standing on the edge between night and day. With a single step forward, he would be in the dark of night.

The sound of wailing rose and fell within the darkness.

Almost at the same moment that he came to stand on the border between night and day, the feeling of the summons rose up again within him. It was as if a huge hand had plunged into his chest and grabbed ahold of his heart. Panting, he looked up at the illusory rifts ahead, and once again caught sight of the young man sitting there in the middle of everything.

It was impossible to see the young man's face clearly, but his voice echoed out within Meng Hao's mind.

"Come....

"Successor of the League of Demon Sealers.... Come....

"I am... the Fifth Generation Demon Sealer...."

1. His vision of that included nine suns was in chapter 819, although something similar was also mentioned in chapter 587.

# Chapter 955: Fifth Demon Sealing Hex

Few people ever made it to the Ancient Burial Ground region of the clan's ancestral land. For most people, the Nine Nethermountains were the limit. Over the ancestral land's countless years of existence, even the few people that did make it to the Ancient Burial Ground had been unable to proceed any further.

It wasn't that nobody had ever passed this stage before. However, of the very few of those who had successfully challenged this region, none were able to pass the final region, the Misty Heaven Vault. Even for those in the Dao Realm, none could progress more than a few steps into it.

Meng Hao stood at the border of the Ancient Burial Ground, looking at the darkness of night up ahead. A strange gleam flickered in his eyes, and after a moment of contemplation, he sent out some divine will, causing the terracotta soldier to stride forward and enter the darkness of the Ancient Burial Ground.

In the moment that they entered, all of the illusory rifts suddenly opened wide, like huge mouths. Instantly, the entire area was surrounded.

Meng Hao could see different worlds inside the rifts, each of which appeared to be some sort of trial by fire.

There was also an incredible pressure that emanated out of them. Some of these rifts seemed to have auras similar to the terracotta soldier.

He could sense numerous terrifying auras that caused his eyes to flicker. This was the first time he had encountered an environment that would pose a danger to him even considering the presence of the terracotta soldier.

"This place is like a maze, huh.... Getting through all these trials by fire is a matter of luck, but will also depend on one's cultivation base." Meng Hao's eyes shone with determination, whereas the terracotta soldier's glittered with a cold light. It strode forward, selected a rift, and stepped in.

Meanwhile, the Seventh Patriarch floated in midair. His brow was

furrowed, but a bright light flickered in his eyes. To him, there was something different about the Ancient Burial Ground.

“Something seems off....” he thought. After looking around, his gaze settled on something in the distance, and he suddenly began to tremble.

“Huh?” He sent out some divine sense, and after a moment, his expression changed to one of surprise.

He had just discovered that at some unknown point, a mist had begun to rise up within the ancestral land. It covered everything. This was something completely unprecedented, and left him astonished. After the Ancient Burial Ground was the Misty Heaven Vault, a place no one had ever been. Apparently that was the source of this mist, and apparently, the mists in the Misty Heaven Vault were growing thicker.

This change caused the Seventh Patriarch’s eyes to narrow in thought.

Fang Daohong didn’t dare to get any closer than he was. He stayed at the border of the Ancient Burial Ground, watching as Meng Hao unhesitatingly entered the rift. He paused for a moment as he considered leaving. Then he thought back to the pain he had endured, and he realized that he didn’t dare to. He sat down cross-legged to wait in silence.

When Meng Hao entered the rift, he found himself in a majestic land, in the middle of which was a huge rift that was the exit.

As soon as he appeared in this world, numerous globes of ghost fire appeared and then shot toward him. As soon as they got close, they began to self-detonate.

Booms filled the air as the terracotta soldier swung its sword. A Quasi-Dao aura exploded out, and the self-detonating ghost fire globes couldn’t even get close before they were frozen in midair.

Meng Hao’s expression was these same as ever as he sat on the terracotta soldier. It proceeded forward, and before long, emerged from the rift back into another location within the Ancient Burial Ground, several thousand meters further in than it had originally been.

Once again, they were surrounded by numerous rifts. Just as Meng Hao

had speculated, this place was a maze, with each of the rifts acting as a tunnel that led to another location.

"How exactly do you get to the end of a maze like this..." Meng Hao thought with a frown. His eyes flickered for a moment before he closed them. His Demon Sealer's aura then emanated out, gradually forming a resonance with the stone stele in the central position of this region.

A moment later, Meng Hao's eyes opened. Without hesitation, he commanded the terracotta soldier to reverse direction and step into one of the numerous nearby rifts.

After entering the rift, he found himself in a world of lightning and thunder. There was no ground, only a sea, with huge waves, each dozens of meters high.

Gigantic shadows could be seen beneath the surface of the water, which would occasionally lash out, transforming into giant tentacles that attacked Meng Hao. An aura similar to the Ancient Realm emanated out from the bottom of the sea.

Meng Hao's face was calm as the terracotta soldier extended its right hand and then pushed downward toward the surface of the sea. Immediately, a blue light emanated out from its body, and ice spread out across the water. Cracking sounds could be heard as the entire sea was transformed into a chunk of ice!

The waves were frozen in place, and the tentacles were turned into statues. Even the Ancient Realm aura beneath the surface of the water was completely sealed.

The terracotta soldier proceeded onward, flying through the air until it reached the exit. They reappeared in the Ancient Burial Ground, a bit closer to the center region.

Meng Hao didn't hesitate at all. Relying on his strange Demon Sealer resonance, he entered a third rift.

A few days passed in which he went through rift after rift. Soon, he had passed through more than a hundred. Most of them contained an enemy

or enemies who were comparable to the Ancient Realm.

There were three in which he encountered beings who were at the peak of the Ancient Realm.

However, the most dangerous situation he faced was an encounter with an illusory middle-aged man who, shockingly, was a Quasi-Dao Paragon.

That battle was world-shaking, and although the terracotta soldier won in the end, it did suffer damage.

The difficulty of the challenges he faced left Meng Hao shocked. Without the terracotta soldier, and relying only on his own power, he would never have been able to reach this point. Fundamentally speaking, this good fortune simply did not belong to Meng Hao!

Meng Hao might have thought that what he was doing was quite a challenge, but as for Fang Daohong, who was still waiting at the border of the Ancient Burial Ground, he was flabbergasted yet again. As an Elder of the clan, he was well-aware of how terrifying this place was.

There were 100,000 rift worlds, none of which were fixed in place. They could change at any time, and inside of each world, there could be enemies of the Spirit Realm, the Immortal Realm, the Ancient Realm and the Quasi-Dao Realm. There were even some terrifying beings of the actual Dao Realm!

Their appearance within the worlds was completely random, making passage through them extremely difficult.

This place had been constructed by the first generation Patriarch in his later years, and was a place of bizarre mysteries.

“He’s gotten through more than a hundred, and each time it seems like he picks the right one and gets closer to the center!” It wasn’t just Fang Daohong who had made this judgement. The Seventh Patriarch was also watching Meng Hao’s progress through the rifts with silent astonishment.

“The little hoodlum somehow knows which path to follow? No, that’s impossible! There is no path to follow. It’s just that his luck is way too good! Not a single choice he made is a waste; every step he takes brings

him closer to the center!"

As Fang Daohong and the Seventh Patriarch looked on in shock, Meng Hao entered another rift. He continued forward relentlessly until, the following day, he emerged from a rift and found himself in the exact center of the Ancient Burial Ground!

Directly in front of him was an enormous stone stele, rising tall up into the air, emanating a mysterious light!

To Meng Hao's eyes, though, this was not a stone stele, but rather, a young man wearing a long robe, sitting there cross-legged. As Meng Hao approached, he looked up.

Their eyes met, and Meng Hao's mind filled with roaring. At the same time, the ancient Demon Sealing Jade in his bag of holding began to vibrate.

When the young man spoke, his voice was soft.

"For you to be able to stand in front of me indicates that your cultivation base is probably at the peak of the Ancient Realm, only a hair away from the Dao Realm. You probably already have a profound understanding of the Essence.

"Years ago, when I left the Mountain and Sea Realm, someone told me that I should leave a stream of divine sense behind, to give some hope to future generations of the League of Demon Sealers....

"Therefore, I left my Daoist magic behind, sending it throughout the Mountain and Sea Realm for people to acquire.... Throughout the great Nine Mountains and Seas, my magic created numerous Ancient Burial Grounds. Each and every one of those Ancient Burial Grounds contains my magic, but only members of the League of Demon Sealers can receive my true legacy.

"What you are looking at now is just one of these locations. Throughout the Nine Mountains and Seas, there are a total of more than 90,000 such locations. Anyone can be enlightened regarding my magic, but the legacy can only be passed on four times. After that, the divine will that I left

behind in the Ancient Burial Grounds will disperse amidst the Mountains and Seas, never to be seen again. Currently... this is the fourth time my legacy is being passed on.

"I am not a cultivator from the Mountain and Sea Realm, and only arrived here by accident. I became the Fifth Generation Demon Sealer due to a mishap; a chance occurrence, you might say, and was only able to stay in the Mountain and Sea Realm for a thousand years. My Hex is called, Inside and Outside.

"The countless rifts around you are like the surface of a mirror. The concept of being inside or outside of that mirror is a concept which also exists in your own heart.

"There are 100,000 rifts here, and this... is my Fifth Demon Sealing Hex... Inside-Outside Hexing!" With that, he lifted his right hand, and a tiny rift opened up in his palm, which began to rotate.

At the same time, the surrounding 100,000 rifts began to spin around, a bizarre scene that caused the Seventh Patriarch and Fang Daohong to stare with wide eyes and reeling minds.

"This is the Essence of Inside and Outside," the young man said coolly. "When I say Inside, Heaven and Earth can be consumed...." At this point, all of the rifts opened wide, causing the entire Ancient Burial Ground, as well the rest of the ancestral land, to twist and distort. Simultaneously, outside in the Fang Clan, twisting distortions could also be seen on Planet East Victory.

It was as if some invisible, terrifying force were about to swallow up the whole planet!

A terrifying hexing magic like this caused Meng Hao's mind to reel. How could he ever have imagined that the Fifth Hex... would actually be so powerful it could shake Heaven and Earth!?

Then the young man spoke again.

"When I say Outside, the Heavens are released...." All of the rifts suddenly shrank, sealing up. The Ancient Burial Ground, the ancestral

land, the Fang Clan, and Planet East Victory all returned to normal in the blink of an eye.

All of these strange transformations happened so incredibly quickly that most people didn't even notice them.

However, deep beneath the Fang Clan ancestral mansion, in the stony cavern, the Fang Clan Patriarchs who had been asleep suddenly trembled and then began to open their eyes.

Furthermore, in the deepest recesses of the cavern, the Earth Patriarch of the Fang Clan slowly opened his eyes. The sky faded, and the lands trembled.

"Inside and Outside. Consuming and releasing. This is my Hex.... Sit in front of me and contemplate this hexing magic. In the League of Demon Sealers... when the Nine Hexes are combined, the Mountain and Sea Realm will be returned to the Demon Sealers!"

"If you are destined to leave the Mountain and Sea Realm, and I, Tian Pingzi am still alive, then you can seek me out. I owe the League of Demon Sealers, and can act as your Dao Protector." With that, the young man closed his eyes.

# Chapter 956: A Struggle of Generations!

A tremor ran through Meng Hao, and he began to pant. He knew that this area was somewhere he should never even have been able to step into. Furthermore, his cultivation base should have been at the peak of the Ancient Realm before attempting to accept the legacy of the Fifth Hex.

And yet, because of the terracotta soldier, here he was!

Meng Hao's eyes narrowed, and he didn't immediately take action. He still remembered the sense of crisis he had felt because of the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer, and thus, he proceeded with caution and even a bit of hesitation.

He did not sense any feeling of danger from the Fifth Generation Demon Sealer, and the ancient Demon Sealing Jade hadn't acted strangely. He muttered to himself for a bit, unwilling to give up so easily.

"It's too bad my second true self is still in the process of recovering after being destroyed. If he was here I could have him try it out first." After a moment, his eyes shone with determination.

Rewards come only with risk, and it is better to take a gamble than to simply give up.

He decided to hesitate no longer. He walked up to the young man and bowed. Then, maintaining full vigilance, he gradually sent his cultivation base to rotating. If anything unexpected happened, he would use all of his divine abilities to flee instantly. Furthermore, he used divine will to have the terracotta soldier stand guard next to him.

As he crossed his legs and began to meditate, the young man slowly extended his arm and pushed down on Meng Hao's forehead.

The two of them suddenly seemed to be connected through ages of time and distant space.

A legacy was being passed on!

They were separated by many generations, by many years, and by the distance between them. Despite that, they were both here in the Fang Clan

ancestral land, performing the bequeathment of a legacy!

A massive rumbling like a Dao river or a Heavenly sea poured into Meng Hao's forehead. In the blink of an eye, he felt as if his mind would collapse, his head explode.

His heart trembled as though lightning were exploding relentlessly inside of him. His face instantly turned ashen, and blood oozed out of his mouth. An intense sense of deadly crisis appeared. There was no sensation that made him think the young man in front of him wished him dead. It was simply that Meng Hao's cultivation base was insufficient, not strong enough to support the legacy.

However, he gritted his teeth and, expression one of determination, continued to accept the legacy that he originally should not have been able to accept given his current level of power.

His body gradually came to occupy a space between illusory and corporeal. His aura weakened, as though the flame of his life force were dimming.

Up in midair, the Seventh Patriarch stared in confusion. He was able to tell that something strange was going on with the Ancient Burial Ground because Meng Hao had entered it.

He looked closely at Meng Hao, and then, his pupils constricted as if he had just noticed something. He was visibly moved and took a deep breath.

"He's accepting a legacy!"

"This Ancient Burial Ground has been here for countless years. Although not many people are capable of reaching this location, there have been a few. Those rifts are locations of trials by fire, not legacies. And yet... this kid is actually contemplating enlightenment of a legacy!" The Seventh Patriarch's mind filled with roaring.

"But whose legacy is it that he can sense?" A profound gleam appeared in his mind as he looked in the direction of the Misty Heaven Vault off in the distance.

Time passed slowly. Meng Hao's aura grew weaker, and the flame of his

life force dimmed. Anyone who could see him personally would realize that he was accepting a legacy. However, on the bloodline jade slip, it simply looked like he was dying.

Of course, there were six other black-robed cultivators in the ancestral land in addition to Fang Daohong, and all of them were checking their jade slips. What they clearly saw was that the dot representing Meng Hao was growing weaker and darker. They also saw that Fang Daohong's dot of light was very close to Meng Hao.

This made it very easy for them to jump to the wrong conclusion.

They all thought that Meng Hao's light was growing weaker because of Fang Daohong.

Although the remaining six black-robed men were in general being very cautious, all of them had different personalities. Some were decisive, some were hesitant, some were anxious, and some were impulsive!

About five hundred kilometers from Meng Hao's current location was a middle-aged man in a long black robe, whose eyes were glittering brightly. "Fang Hao definitely has some sort of valuable treasure. That's how he was able to kill two Ancient Realm Elders in a row. Most likely, he can't utilize the power of that magical item for a long time, because his cultivation base isn't sufficient. And now... Fang Daohong is there.... Since he's not dead, that means we have a chance!"

The man was skinny and had a long, hooked nose, making him look especially sinister.

"A precious treasure that can enable a cultivator nearly in the Immortal Realm to be able to slay an Ancient Realm cultivator...." The middle-aged man hesitated for a moment, then looked at the bloodline jade slip again. What he noticed was that two other dots were already moving in Meng Hao's direction, which caused his eyes to fill with determination.

"I'm the closest, so as long as I'm careful, there shouldn't be any problems!" Without hesitating any further, the man quickly shot off into the distance.

At the same time, two other black-robed cultivators were nearing from two other directions. They were thinking the same thing as the first black-robed man, and rapidly began to close in on Meng Hao.

As for the other three black-robed men, two of them wavered back and forth a bit before deciding to play it safe. The final black-robed man... was an old man who was standing at the entrance to the ancestral land, where the Dao Guardsman had once been.

He was examining the collapsed mountains; the endless amounts of ruins and rubble that filled the area caused his mind to tremble. Unable to even think of what to say, he just looked at the scene for a while before taking in a deep breath.

"The Dao Guardsman... is gone?" he thought. Great waves of shock filled him, and he began to shiver. A look of astonishment filled his eyes as he suddenly realized that the first Ancient Realm Elder who had been killed... died in this location.

He almost immediately realized why. When the answer occurred to him, he could hardly believe it. However, that answer explained everything, as unbelievable as it was.

"How could Fang Hao have possibly taken control of the Dao Guardsman!?!?" He took out the bloodline jade slip and looked at the fading dot that represented Meng Hao. Then he looked at the three other cultivators who were rapidly closing in on him. There was no way for him to get word to the others while he was in the ancestral land, so he could only watch as the three dots began to converge on Meng Hao, drawn like moths to the flame.

"If those people die, then it will confirm my speculation that Fang Hao has somehow managed to take control of the Dao Guardsman!" The old man panted, unwilling to accept that he was correct, and yet unable to come up with any other explanation.

Time passed by quickly. It was now three days later, and Meng Hao had already been in the ancestral land for about a month. Currently, he sat cross-legged in front of the stone stele, eyes closed, completely motionless.

His aura was extremely weak, and the flame of his life force was almost on the point of being extinguished. His mind crashed with lightning and thunder as the legacy of the Fifth Hex continuously poured into him. The images he saw made him feel like he was descending into some bottomless abyss.

It was as if his mind were being forcibly distended, which led to intense, tearing pain. He felt like he was stuck in a living hell.

Because he was accepting a legacy like this with such a low cultivation base, his Eternal stratum had long since gone to work, and was in a perpetual state of support, ensuring that his mind did not collapse or explode.

As for his true Immortal fleshly body, it was immense help in keeping his mind stable.

As the legacy of the Fifth Hex poured into him, it began to form a pattern like that of a hand that continuously flipped back and forth in his mind.

Sometimes it faced up, sometimes it faced down. That cycle seemed to contain Yin and Yang, as if the entire cosmos was hidden within it! It contained a great Dao of Heaven and Earth!

The 100,000 rifts that surrounded him in the Ancient Burial Ground also went into a cyclical pattern, as if they were breathing. Occasionally they would open, other times they would close. From a distance, it looked like 100,000 eyes, continuously opening and closing.

The cycle continued for three days, never ending.

Fang Daohong had long since begun to gape at the scene. He was once again completely shaken by Meng Hao, and couldn't help but view him as a terrifying figure, a cultivator essentially in the Immortal Realm, the likes of which he had never before seen.

In fact, he had never even heard of anything like this.

"If he reaches Immortal Ascension... he'll definitely shake all of Planet East Victory!" Fang Daohong's eyes shone with a strange light, and he

suddenly realized that having his life or death controlled by Meng Hao, wasn't actually... a particularly unacceptable thing.

Up in midair, the Seventh Patriarch looked down at Meng Hao, and his mind trembled even more than Fang Daohong's. His eyes shone with a brilliant light as he looked at Meng Hao, and he suddenly had the feeling that he was looking at the future of the Fang Clan.

"He already has a true Immortal fleshly body, and the Immortal qi within him has almost reached the pinnacle....

"He has absolutely no aura of an Immortality Illumination Vine on him. Or perhaps his Immortality Illumination Vine has already been fully absorbed by his Dharma Idol. In that case... this kid is going to reach Immortal Ascension in less than a hundred days!

"In the future, he will definitely become a pillar of the Fang Clan!!"

Meanwhile, outside of the Ninth Mountain, in the boundless sea among the stars, the Ninth Sea, a shocking aura suddenly exploded out.

That aura caused vast mists to roil up from the surface of the sea, which formed into the shape of countless figures that seemed to dance about gracefully. Lightning crackled up above, and a Tribulation Cloud began to form.

At the same time, an enormous Door of Immortality gradually came into view above the Ninth Sea!

The Ninth Sea had countless islands, many of which were inhabited by cultivators. Currently, all of those cultivators' minds filled with shock, and they looked up into the air. No matter how far away they were, they could sense the Immortal qi that was roiling out.

"That's... a Door of True Immortality!!

"Who is about to reach true Immortal Ascension!? Who is about to batter open the Door of Immortality!?!?"

As the cultivators on the various islands in the Ninth Sea were all shocked, a massive rift opened up in the surface of the sea below the Door

of Immortality. From within that rift appeared another massive door, which rose up from inside the water.

Inside the door was a young woman, behind whom floated a female corpse. The woman didn't hesitate for a moment before flying up into the air toward the Door of Immortality.

At the same time, more than a thousand cultivators also flew out of the door in the sea. There were men and women, and all of them wore extremely somber expressions as they fanned out in every direction to form a huge spell formation. Next, a hundred enormous sea dragons shot out of the door, roaring as they circled about the area to act as Dharma Protectors for the young woman. Ten old men also appeared, each one of whom emanated astonishing auras. All of them were at the peak of the Ancient Realm, and each one had extinguished a minimum of thirteen or fourteen Soul Lamps!

These... were the cultivators of the Nine Seas God World! The Three Great Daoist Societies had deep reserves, as was plainly visible now!

The last person to appear was an old woman who wore a sea-blue robe. Her aura superseded the auras of all the other cultivators present, as if her presence could cause even the Heavens to acquiesce to her.

"Dong'er, your day of true Immortality has arrived," the old woman said coolly. "Open that Door of Immortality, accept the Immortal qi, and achieve true Immortal Ascension!"

Fan Dong'er took a deep breath and then shot toward the Door of Immortality.

Lightning crashed and thunder boomed, and yet, it could do nothing to cause Fan Dong'er to even pause. Her body suddenly exploded with an energy that could rival the Immortal Tribulation itself.

A great event was beginning, heralding the arrival of a new generation of Chosen. Among them was someone who had suppressed her cultivation in the previous era just for the sake of becoming a true Immortal in the current era. A cultivator of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, the second to follow in the footsteps of Pill Demon and achieve true Immortal

Ascension... Fan Dong'er!

As of this moment, people in sects and clans all over the Ninth Mountain and Sea used a variety of methods to observe as Fan Dong'er achieved Immortal Ascension above the Ninth Sea!

Meanwhile....

In the underworld of the Fourth Mountain, next to the Bridge of Reincarnation, a cold woman stood there, looking over her shoulder profoundly at what seemed to be the direction of the Ninth Mountain. It was as if she hoped to get one clear look at the Ninth Mountain so she would never forget it. Her long, black hair danced in the wind. She looked as graceful as a butterfly as she stepped forward into Reincarnation.

In her previous life, her name had been Xu Qing.

# Chapter 957: Inner Devils of the Chosen!

The Door of Immortality appeared above the Ninth Sea, and Fan Dong'er rose up into the sky. In the instant in which she slammed into the door, the various clans and sects throughout the Ninth Mountain and Sea could sense a sudden change in the Heavens.

The change was not drastic; it was merely a slight strengthening in the Immortal qi of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. However, the change was like slight ripples on a glassy surface of water, and was detectable by many.

It was most obvious in the areas around the Door of Immortality in the Ninth Sea. There, the Immortal qi surged as a great Dao descended. Rumbling filled the air, Tribulation Lightning crackled, and mists churned.

Fan Dong'er was surrounded by Tribulation Lightning as she slammed into the Door of Immortality. Her eyes were filled with determination, and her heart was filled with one thought.

“Meng Hao, I absolutely must surpass you!”

Fan Dong'er was the second person in this generation after Pill Demon to attack the Door of Immortality. At the same time, the other Chosen who were in secluded meditation were preparing to emerge and attempt to break through to the true Immortal Realm. They could sense the change in the Immortal qi, but they ignored it. Eyes shining with determination, they continued with their secluded meditation.

Zhao Yifan currently sat cross-legged in a secret chamber in the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto.

“The age of true Immortal Ascension has arrived,” he murmured. “The Three Great Daoist Sects, the Four Great Clans, the Five Holy Lands, the Three Churches and Six Sects... have been building up power and resources for years, all for the Chosen who will become true Immortals.

“They all plan to use their collected resources and dammed-up cultivation to surge forth into the true Immortal Realm. It will be like the saying ‘The bird is silent, but its first song amazes all men!’” Zhao Yifan’s

eyes suddenly opened.

“Opening 70 meridians is average. 80 meridians qualifies one to be Chosen. Opening 90 meridians... makes you the blazing sun of a generation!

“Fang Mu... I wonder if you will be able to enter this age of true Immortality!” Zhao Yifan’s eyes gleamed brightly. He had long since recovered from his injuries, as well as from the psychological blow he had suffered. However, he knew that deep within his heart, a shadow lurked, weighing down on him. It had become something like an inner Devil.

Meng Hao, in his guise as Fang Mu, had become Zhao Yifan’s inner Devil!

It was with his true identity of Meng Hao that he had become Fan Dong’er’s inner Devil!

Similarly, all of the other Chosen he had encountered in the Ninth Mountain and Sea had inner Devils because of him!

On Planet East Victory, in the Fang Clan’s ancestral mansion, Fang Wei was trembling. His life force aura occasionally glittered brilliantly, and occasionally went dim. Sometimes his features twisted savagely, while at other times he wore a smile. Strange ripples undulated off of him as he absorbed Immortal qi from the nine withered old men who surrounded him.

“Fang Hao... true Immortality is upon me. If I fail, then there will no longer be a Fang Wei under the Heavens. However, if I succeed... then the instant I become a true Immortal, I will cut you down and sever this inner Devil of mine!”

On Planet North Reed, in the restricted area in the Li Clan, there was a lotus pond. The pond waters were clear, and fish could be seen swimming to and fro. Birdsongs filled the air, along with the fragrance of flowers. It was like a miniature utopia. Li Ling’er sat there cross-legged atop a lotus. Her skin was clear and delicate, and slightly flushed. She wore a simple, plain robe, but it still managed to accentuate her exquisite and alluring body.

She was also about to break through to the true Immortal Realm!

At the same time, Wang Mu, Song Luodan, Taiyang Zi, Sun Hai, and many others were in their respective sects and clans, all preparing to break through to the true Immortal Realm.

As all of these people made their breakthroughs, Meng Hao's image floated in their minds. Meng Hao... had become the inner Devil of an entire generation of Chosen.

Meanwhile, a young man sat cross-legged on an asteroid floating in the starry sky of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. He wore a black robe, and had long white hair. His features were handsome, and at the same time, ancient.

Immortal qi swirled around him, and shockingly, he held an Immortality Illumination vine in his hand.

"In the Wang Clan... Wang Mu is the blazing sun, and I have been forgotten. That doesn't matter. The only thing I need is this Immortality Illumination Vine." The young man lifted the Immortality Illumination Vine above his head and looked off into space.

"Meng Hao, I very much look forward to the day when you and I can meet again...." This young man was none other than Wang Tengfei!

At around this time, Wang Youcui, Fatty, Cheng Fan, and all of Meng Hao's other companions from Planet South Heaven who had scattered out to the various other sects, were all being informed by Senior members of their respective organizations about the matter of true Immortality. All of them were looking up into the Heavens.

"I wonder where Meng Hao is right now...." Fatty murmured, sounding a bit depressed.

In the Kunlun Society, Chu Yuyan quietly sat there cross-legged. No Immortal qi swirled around her, but she wasn't anxious. She had a whole thousand years after true Immortal destiny appeared in which she could achieve her own true Immortal Ascension.

Although she couldn't keep up with the first wave, she was confident

that she would be able to reach true Immortality in those thousand years.

"The age of True Immortality is here...." murmured Pill Demon, who stood on a nearby mountain boulder. He looked up into the stars.

At the same moment, another person spoke those same words.

It was an old man who stood there on Planet South Heaven, in a mountain in the Eastern Lands. He looked up into the Heavens and muttered the exact same sentence.

That man... was Shui Dongliu.

Meng Hao was unaware of the stir that had been caused in the Ninth Mountain and Sea due to Fan Dong'er's Door of Immortality. He continued to sit cross-legged in front of the stone stele in the Ancient Burial Ground, accepting the legacy of the Fifth Hex.

His aura was incredibly weak, and the flame of his life force seemed to be on the verge of being extinguished. The 100,000 rifts around him were trembling slightly, their cycles of opening and closing becoming more rapid. The Ancient Burial Ground was starting to look even more bizarre than usual.

Gradually, mist appeared on the ground; it grew thicker as it spread out through the ancestral land, into all of the regions and areas.

The mist also collected in the Ancient Burial Ground, and was especially thick in the area around Meng Hao. It covered the terracotta soldier, making it invisible even to divine sense.

Meng Hao's figure began to grow blurry.

Fang Daohong was extremely frightened. He worried that if Meng Hao died, then because of the strange hexing magic, he would also die.

As he continued to grow more and more frightened, a beam of prismatic light appeared off in the distance. It was another of the black-robed men, who shot in his general direction. Initially, his speed was not particularly fast, but at about thirty thousand meters away, the man seemed to catch sight of something that caused him to accelerate explosively.

Fang Daohong's eyes flickered as he turned to look at the man in the beam of light. He shot forward with incredible speed, coming to a stop about three hundred meters away. The man's face was grim as he looked over.

"Elder Daohong, we're all in this together, if one of us hogs everything for himself, it will be difficult to explain to the others." The man's eyes glittered as he looked further into the Ancient Burial Ground. He saw Meng Hao sitting cross-legged in meditation, mostly covered by mists. He didn't notice the terracotta soldier, which was now completely enveloped by the mists.

His eyes sparkled with avarice, then he looked back at Fang Daohong and smiled insincerely.

"If you want to go in there, I won't stop you," Fang Daohong said loftily. "However, there's no need to play with words." He snorted coldly, acting as he would under normal circumstances.

The other black-robed man's eyes flickered as he turned from Fang Daohong to look at Meng Hao. Inwardly, he was a bit hesitant. However, Meng Hao's current state made it seem like he was on the verge of death; the man was unable to see that he was accepting a legacy.

"Well, never mind then. Since you're waiting patiently, Elder Daohong, then I'll just wait with you." With that, he smiled and then sat down cross-legged.

Fang Daohong showed no reaction whatsoever to this. Inwardly, though, he breathed a sigh of relief. His life was now under Meng Hao's control, and even if he appeared to be on the verge of dying, Fang Daohong wasn't about to take any risks. In fact, he was even more nervous than Meng Hao would be; he feared that Meng Hao's death would result in his own soul dispersing.

After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, Meng Hao trembled. Blood oozed out of his mouth, and only a tiny spark remained of his flame of life force. His body was now stiff, and he looked as pale as a corpse.

The rifts around him flickered rapidly as they opened and closed. They were like 100,000 eyes blinking, and left Fang Daohong and the other black-robed man feeling incredibly shocked.

One of them was nervous. The other one waited in anticipation.

Around this time, two more beams of light sped along, apparently having detected Meng Hao's abnormal state. They shot forward with explosive speed until they appeared at the border of the Ancient Burial Ground, where they turned into two black-robed men.

As soon as they appeared, Fang Daohong's eyes narrowed. One of the men didn't pause at all, but rather, instantly shot into the Ancient Burial Ground. Taking advantage of a moment when the rifts were closed, he shot forward about three hundred meters.

Fang Daohong's heart began to thump, and the black-robed man who had arrived earlier frowned. After a moment, he also waited until the rifts were closed and then stepped forward into the Ancient Burial Ground.

The third black-robed man also flickered forward, advancing toward Meng Hao.

"Fang Hao has a valuable treasure! Let's kill him and get the treasure. We can decide what to do with it afterward!"

"Excellent plan!" After coming to an agreement, the three men waited until the 100,000 rifts closed again, and then advanced at top speed.

Fang Daohong watched in silence, coldly eyeing the three men as they proceeded into the Ancient Burial Ground. Finally, he decided to join them, although he moved slowly, ensuring that he was bringing up the rear.

Four men walked in a line, heading ever closer to Meng Hao in the center of the Ancient Burial Ground.

Enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, in which time the 100,000 rifts opened and closed. Eventually, the two fastest men reached a position about six hundred meters from Meng Hao.

Another tremor ran through Meng Hao at that point, but instead of just a trickle of blood oozing out, Meng Hao coughed up a huge mouthful of blood, and all color drained out of his face. At that point, the flame of his life force actually winked out.

In that moment, the rifts in the area all shuddered and closed, leaving a clear path all the way to Meng Hao.

With the exception of Fang Daohong, who was still extremely anxious and feared that he was about to die, the black-robed men's eyes all glowed with greed. They had been acting very cautiously before, but that seemed to be forgotten as they exploded with speed. Rumbling filled the air as they closed in on Meng Hao.

However, when the two black-robed men in the lead were only about thirty meters away, Meng Hao's eyes suddenly snapped open. They were bloodshot, and his gaze was as sharp as a blade, filled with naked savagery.

An indescribably terrifying aura suddenly exploded out from Meng Hao. In that instant, all of the closed rifts in the area suddenly opened simultaneously.

It was like 100,000 eyes had instantly opened and were looking at the four men!

# Chapter 958: Strolling Through the Immortal Kingdom!

Being glared at by 100,000 cold eyes is something that would cause many people to be so terrified their hair would stand on end. These black-robed men had profound cultivation bases, and might have been able to disregard the phenomena, were it not for the fact that Meng Hao had opened his eyes at exactly the same time.

There was also a brutality that seemed to surround Meng Hao. Add the fact that he had just recently killed two Ancient Realm experts, and it caused the faces of the nearest two black-robed men to flicker.

However, they were decisive people. Killing intent flashed in their eyes. Having come this far and having no path of retreat, they decided that they might as well attack!

"He's as weak as an arrow at the end of its flight! Killing him will be easy!"

"His precious treasure is probably difficult to activate! Considering his current state, he definitely can't use it! Kill him!"

Their eyes flickered coldly, and their killing intent raged. Their cultivation bases surged as their nine Soul Lamps, eight burning and one extinguished, caused the aura of the Ancient Realm to swirl about. The natural law in the area was affected, and ripples spread out.

They also pulled out magical items. One of them had a jade cauldron; the other, a piece of green bamboo. Inside the jade cauldron were several flying swords engraved with dragons, and the bamboo was surrounded by arcs of crackling lightning. Both objects were clearly extraordinary.

They waved their sleeves, causing the magical items to speed toward Meng Hao, as they sped close behind. Bolstered by the power of their Soul Lamps, their killing intent surged, and their greed was impossible to conceal.

In almost the same moment that they attacked, the terracotta soldier,

which was still covered by the mist, suddenly stepped forward.

The ground quaked, and some of the mist dissipated from around the terracotta soldier, making it mostly visible.

A ring-shaped ripple surged out, with the terracotta soldier and Meng Hao at the center. When it passed over the jade cauldron, the swords inside shattered as if they were nothing more than dried up twigs. The cauldron itself cracked and then collapsed.

As for the green bamboo, it was the same; it shattered into countless pieces that became nothing more than flying ash. The lightning in the bamboo was also snuffed out, and vanished without a trace.

As the ripple spread out, the pressure it emanated caused the two black-robed men's hearts to tremble. Blood sprayed out of their mouths as they fell backward in retreat, almost falling into one of the rifts behind them.

When they finally came to a stop, they looked at the terracotta soldier, and their faces fell as they were almost struck speechless.

The greatsword it held in its hand, the suddenness with which it its aura had burst out, as well as the familiarity of its figure, immediately caused the men to feel roaring in their minds, as if an enormous, shapeless hand were ripping apart their psyches.

“That’s the aura of a Quasi-Dao Paragon!!”

“There’s actually a statue here!!”

“That statue looks so familiar....”

“That’s... that’s... the Dao Guardsman!!” The two cultivators’ eyes went wide with disbelief. They felt as if a mountain were crushing down onto them; their minds reeled as they realized their lives were about to meet an uncertain end.

“This is impossible!!” They were thoroughly astonished, and now that they could sense the terracotta soldier’s aura, they had no doubt in their mind as to how the other two Ancient Realm elders had suddenly died.

“He... he can actually control the Dao Guardsman!” They no longer had

any desire whatsoever to engage in battle. Their scalps were numb, and they were scared out of their minds. They thought back to how they had bravely charged into this situation, and they suddenly realized that doing so was potentially the most foolish and stupid thing they had ever done in their lives. They backed up at top speed, cursing their weak cultivation bases, and cursing all of the rifts in the area that made it impossible to escape.

The other black-robed man was also looking on with wide eyes, panting in disbelief.

Fang Daohong was the only one whose facial expression was calm. Inwardly, he heaved a sigh of relief, and his eyes began to flicker. His cultivation base had long since recovered, and he was now trying to decide how he could perform some meritorious service in aid of Meng Hao.

In the exact moment that the two black-robed men up front began to retreat, Meng Hao's eyes flickered with killing intent. The terracotta soldier raised its greatsword and then slashed it down toward one of the two men. In the blink of an eye, everything went still and quiet. Scintillating, blinding sword light appeared, slashing toward the black-robed man's throat.

"Bring him to me, alive," Meng Hao murmured weakly.

The world returned to normal. The terracotta soldier's blade twisted, turning the strike from a slash into a slap. Blood sprayed from the black-robed cultivator's mouth as his body crumpled. The terracotta soldier reached out, grabbed him, and pinned him down on the ground in front of Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's face was pale white as he reached out and pushed his hand onto the black-robed man's forehead. He took a deep breath, and his eyes shone with the glow of blood as he utilized the Blood Demon Grand Magic.

The black-robed man's eyes went wide, and he let out a bloodcurdling scream. When the other people present heard the scream, their minds trembled because of the indescribable tragic wretchedness therein.

The black-robed man's body withered. His cultivation base rapidly faded away. Even his soul was absorbed by Meng Hao. Everything, even his life force, was used by Meng Hao to aid in his recovery.

It took only a moment for the screams to fade away. The only thing that remained behind was a terrifying desiccated corpse that lay motionless beneath Meng Hao's hand.

Meng Hao's face was no longer as pale as death. His skin had a bit of color, and his breathing was steady. His eyes shone brightly once again.

As he thought back to how he had accepted the legacy of the Fifth Hex, Meng Hao realized that he had narrowly escaped from death. He really should have died, and had only managed to survive by a fluke.

Considering the level of his cultivation base, he was really incapable of acquiring the Fifth Hex. The price he had paid was actually his life. The flame of his life force really had been extinguished, leaving him hovering on the brink of death. Thankfully, just as he was about to die... these black-robed men came, giving him a second lease on life.

He had only slightly recovered, but this caused the other two black-robed men to feel an even greater sense of deadly crisis.

"W-what technique was that!?!?"

"Damn you, Fang Xiushan! For sending us in here to kill this kid... you deserve to die a horrible death!!"

The two men retreated, looking back in fear at Meng Hao.

However, they were surrounded by rifts that made it impossible for them to escape.

Up above, the Seventh Patriarch watched with a serious expression. He slowly retracted his hand, and looked over thoughtfully at Meng Hao.

"Is that the legacy technique he just acquired?"

Back on the ground, Meng Hao slowly rose to his feet. His face was mostly back to normal, and a profound look gleamed in his eyes. He seemed to be filled with a sea of power that caused anyone who looked at

him to feel as if their souls would be absorbed.

"Grab me another one," he said calmly.

In response to his words, the terracotta soldier immediately strode forward toward the nearest black-robed man. The man howled and, having no other options, leapt into the nearest rift.

The third of the black-robed men was a bit further away from Meng Hao. He gritted his teeth and was about to jump into a nearby rift, when Fang Daohong suddenly blocked his way. The man roared in rage, and the two of them began to fight.

Booms echoed out in all directions. The terracotta soldier stepped into the rift in pursuit and emerged after the space of only a few breaths, holding the black-robed cultivator who had been trying to flee.

The man was trembling, and his face was pale. Even as he looked over at Meng Hao, Meng Hao raised his hand, causing an illusory rift to appear. That slight movement, though, caused the bit of his life force that had been painstakingly restored to be sucked towards the palm of his hand. This caused Meng Hao to immediately stop what he was doing. After a moment of analysis, Meng Hao realized why.

"Although I've accepted the legacy, I'm incapable of actually using the Fifth Hex. Considering the level of my cultivation base, if I try to force it, even if I use all of my cultivation base to cast it, I still can't form the Inside-Outside rifts of the Fifth Hex!"

"Perhaps I'll be able to after I reach the Immortal Realm! This Fifth Hex is similar to the Paragon Bridge. I'll be able to use it as a trump card when I reach the Immortal Realm!" With that, he pushed his hand out toward the black-robed man, who was then surrounded by blood-colored light.

Miserable screams rang out as the man was transformed into a desiccated corpse. Meng Hao's face finally looked normal, and he was completely recovered. He then closed his eyes and rotated his cultivation base.

In response to this, the black-robed man who was fighting Fang

Daohong looked terrified. What he was seeing was far beyond any other deadly crisis that he had ever experienced.

"This guy can't be a near-Immortal Realm cultivator," he thought. "How could someone of that level have such a terrifying divine ability!?!? Fang Xiushan, if I don't die in here, then after I get back to the clan, you and I are going to have a reckoning!!"

Fang Daohong's expression was the same as ever, but inwardly he was trembling. The mysteries surrounding Meng Hao only seemed to grow deeper. After a moment of hesitation, he looked over at the man he was fighting with.

"Fang Linhe, if you want to get out of here alive, then listen to me and don't fight back!" These words caused Fang Linhe to gape in shock. Then he thought back to how Fang Daohong hadn't died despite being near Meng Hao for so long. Suddenly, the hope for life appeared in his heart. Gritting his teeth, he allowed Fang Daohong to strike him in the chest. 1

Blood sprayed out of his mouth as Fang Daohong struck him over and over, seriously injuring Fang Linhe and causing his cultivation base to drop. Soon, it was comparable to a Spirit Realm cultivator, whereupon Fang Daohong stopped his attacks. Giving a meaningful glance to Fang Linhe, he immediately turned and bowed respectfully to Meng Hao.

"Prince, it would be quite a waste to let this man die. Why not use your restrictive spell on him? Once we get back to the clan, he and I will both want a chance to get revenge on Fang Xiushan."

Meng Hao's eyes opened, and he looked coldly at Fang Daohong, then at Fang Linhe, who was acting very subserviently. Without another word, streams of black and white qi appeared in his hand. After rotating around each other for a moment, he sent them flying toward Fang Linhe's forehead. Fang Linhe screamed, then began to shudder. Sweat soaked him almost instantaneously as magical symbols appeared all over his body. Eventually, they converged on his forehead into the form of a single magical symbol that flew out of his forehead and then merged into Meng Hao. Fang Linhe then let out a weak sigh.

Meng Hao looked up at the rifts in the area, and now, they seemed familiar to him.

It almost seemed as if he could control their opening and closing.

“Let’s go,” he said. “We’re going to find out what else is past this Ancient Burial Ground.” With that, he stepped forward. Immediately, the rifts all closed, allowing him to walk directly off into the distance.

Meng Hao strode along like a monarch to these rifts that contained the Fifth Hex. He looked like he was simply taking a stroll through his own Immortal kingdom.

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1. Fang Linhe’s name in Chinese is 方临河 fāng lín hé. Lin means “to face” or “to overlook.” He means “river”.

# Chapter 959: A Lamp!

The scene playing out in front of Fang Daohong and Fang Linhe left them shaken mentally. They immediately followed behind, staring at the terracotta soldier next to Meng Hao. When it came to the statue, Fang Daohong was slightly less surprised, whereas Fang Linhe was completely astonished.

Up in midair, the Seventh Patriarch looked closely at Meng Hao, his expression growing more serious by the moment. Based on everything Meng Hao had done along the way, and all his unprecedented accomplishments, as long as he didn't lose his life, he would surely shake the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea one day.

"In the future, he will be the main pillar of the Fang Clan!"

Meanwhile, Fan Dong'er was still in the midst of her Immortal Tribulation, battering her Door of Immortality. In the Fang Clan Ancestral Mansion, Fang Xiushan was staring pale-faced into a crystal, observing what was happening in the Lifeslip Hall.

One after another, without even half an incense stick of time between them, the lifeslips belonging to two Ancient Realm Elders emitted cracking sounds and then shattered into pieces....

The other jade slip that he had been watching this entire time remained completely unchanged.

"Impossible.... The deaths of the previous two could be chalked up to dangers in the ancestral land. But... but a whole month has passed, Fang Hao is still alive, and two more Ancient Realm Elders are dead!"

"What exactly is going on in the ancestral land? How could this be happening? What's going on!?!?" Fang Xiushan's eyes were completely bloodshot, and his hair was in disarray. He sat there trembling, having long since moved from his own residence to a hidden chamber.

This chamber was very close to where his son Fang Wei was in the middle of secluded meditation. At the moment, Fang Xiushan didn't dare

to set foot outside. Currently, he had no way of resolving the situation, so he had no choice but to conceal himself here.

“As long as Wei’er becomes a true Immortal, the Grand Elder will handle everything according to the clan rules. The clan is most important, so he won’t make things too difficult for me. Plus, I have father to help take care of things. This matter will soon be a thing of the past.

“Fang Hao, you shall die! If you don’t die in the ancestral land, then you’ll die at Wei’er’s hand!” Fang Xiushan’s expression twisted, and he gritted his teeth. Apparently, that outcome was the only one which could release the shock and anxiety he felt in his heart. However, he still couldn’t understand why the nine Ancient Realm Elders he had hired couldn’t kill a solitary Fang Hao. In fact, over the course of a month, four of them were now dead, while Fang Hao was still alive.

Just what had happened in there to cause this unforeseen turn of events? This was currently the source of his greatest confusion.

Even as Fang Xiushan sat there thinking, the Grand Elder was in another location in the Fang Clan ancestral mansion. He was in a rage, his face twisted in anger over what was happening in the Lifeslip Hall. He, of course, was well aware of exactly why all the Elders had died.

His eyes glinted coldly when he summoned Fang Xiushan, only to receive a reply that Fang Xiushan was in secluded meditation near Fang Wei. That caused the Grand Elder to hesitate for a moment.

At the moment, Fang Wei’s Immortal Ascension was the most important matter in the whole clan. All other matters were of secondary importance.

“Fang Wei. Fang Hao.... Let’s see which of the two of you... is the true Chosen.” After another moment of thought, the Grand Elder flicked his sleeve and left.

Back in the ancestral land, Meng Hao proceeded along. The rifts closed wherever he went, all the way until he reached the end of the Ancient Burial Ground. After having passed through regions of 100,000 rifts, he was now surrounded by thick mist.

The mist didn't just exist in this place. The entire ancestral land was filled with it, something that was completely unheard of. Even the Seventh Patriarch was shocked.

Meng Hao stood at the edge of the Ancient Burial Ground, looking at the thick mists up ahead of him. Compared to the mist in his immediate vicinity, the mists up ahead seemed boundless, as if they covered everything, even the Heavens.

Everything was covered in endless, majestic mists.

Off to the side was another huge stone stele, upon which was written three shocking characters....

Misty Heaven Vault!

Beneath the three characters were lines of text, each one being the name of a person.

Next to each name was a number.

The first name on the list was Fang Shoudao, and next to it was the number 39.

There were nineteen names in total, and the last few names on the list all had the number 1 next to them.

The names emanated an ancient feeling, as if they had existed on the stele for many years. When Meng Hao reached the ninth name on the list, his eyes widened in surprise.

The name was Fang Danyun!

He was the Dao of Alchemy Division's current Pill Elder!

Fang Daohong stood next to Meng Hao explaining the location in a low voice. "There is no path through the Heavenly Mist Vault.

"This is the last section of the ancestral land.... The first generation Patriarch's necropolis is located somewhere inside, although nobody knows exactly where.

"From the moment of its creation, this place has been the end of the line

for the clan members who come here. According to the rumors, nobody has ever found the necropolis within the mists. The reason for that, of course, is that there is no path inside.

"From ancient times to now, only nineteen Senior clan members have ever made it to the Misty Heaven Vault, and those numbers next to their names are how many steps they were able to take inside."

Meng Hao's eyes focused intently on the stele.

"Nobody's ever been able to step into the necropolis?" he asked. As he looked at the list of names and numbers on the stele, he sent his divine sense out into the mists. As soon as it entered, it encountered an intense repelling force, and was expelled. These mists truly seemed to be like an impenetrable fortress that did not allow anything to enter.

"Prince," Fang Daohong hurried to say, "you really shouldn't try to go in.... This is a place where people under the Immortal Realm can't even enter. Not even the Dao Guardsman can go in."

"If you want to enter the Misty Heaven Vault, you have to meet two conditions. First, your cultivation base has to be in the Ancient Realm or higher so that you can use your Soul Lamp to guide the way. The second requirement is that you have to possess a corporeal body."

Meng Hao didn't respond. He sent some divine will into the terracotta statue, and sent it forward toward the mists. However, as soon as it touched the border, the same force shoved back, making it impossible for the terracotta soldier to move forward. When he tried to force it to do so, a terrifying pressure exploded out from within the mists.

Meng Hao's mind was shaken, and he immediately pulled the terracotta soldier back.

"Prince, your... your cultivation base isn't in the Ancient Realm, and you have no Soul Lamp. You simply can't proceed." Fang Daohong glanced over at Meng Hao and stepped toward the mists.

As he did so, he inhaled deeply and nine Soul Lamps appeared around him. As they rotated around him, they slowly merged together. When they

had combined into a single lamp, they floated forward to make contact with the mists. As soon as the lamp touched the mist, it sank back by a centimeter.

"Look, Prince," said Fang Daohong, sighing slightly and stepping back to stand next to Meng Hao. "This is my limit, only a single centimeter. If you had a powerful Soul Lamp, you would be able to resist the mists and get much further in."

Meng Hao frowned. Having gotten all the way to this point, he just couldn't resign himself to leaving. If this was the first generation Patriarch's necropolis, then it meant that the Fang Clan's most powerful Daoist Magic, the One Thought Stellar Transformation, would be inside.

It was like standing in front of a mountain of treasure and being incapable of reaching it. To Meng Hao, it was a very intolerable feeling.

However, he was not the type of person to be easily convinced by what could be fallacious information. He stepped forward and, as he stood there in front of the mists, extended his right hand and pushed it forward. Immediately, a powerful force pushed back, as if there were an invisible barrier which prevented him from pushing his hand in at all.

Meng Hao tried pushing a few more times before letting out a resigned sigh. He was just about to retract his hand when his eyes then went wide as he suddenly sensed his Immortal meridian pulsing wildly in a way it never had before. It was almost as if it were reacting to something that existed inside the mists, something that was attracting his Immortal meridian.

Meng Hao had experienced such a sensation before; it was the same sort of feeling he got when the Immortal meridian had strengthened itself by consuming the massive quantities of energy from the stone steles in the Three Great Daoist Societies' trial by fire.

Meng Hao started panting, and his eyes began to glitter brightly. He had an intense premonition that if he could get into the Misty Heaven Vault, then perhaps... he could break through to true Immortality right here in the ancestral land!

Meng Hao immediately began to attempt numerous methods to succeed. After two hours passed, he finally had to admit... that it was a place he really wasn't able to enter.

"Prince," said Fang Daohong, "there's no need to keep trying. We still have less than a month before the ancestral land opens up again. There are still other places with good fortune, places that you can easily get to with the Dao Guardsman. As for this place here... without a Soul Lamp, you might as well just forget about it."

Meng Hao stood there silently.

Up in midair, the Seventh Patriarch was currently paying close attention to what was happening. He watched Meng Hao make his repeated attempts, then sighed, and his eyes flickered with disappointment.

"I guess I set my expectations too high," he thought, shaking his head. "The Misty Heaven Vault requires an Ancient Realm Soul Lamp. That's something the Dao Guardsman can't help out with. The more powerful the Soul Lamp, the further into the Heavenly Mist Vault you can get. However, not even Eldest Brother, the Earth Patriarch, could get more than 39 steps in."

Suddenly, Meng Hao looked up at the Misty Heaven Vault, and his eyes began to gleam with light of curiosity.

"You need a Soul Lamp.... A Soul Lamp to lead the way.... A lamp.... I have a lamp!" Meng Hao began to pant as he glanced back at the Soul Lamps circling around Fang Daohong. Just now, a completely preposterous idea had formed in his mind.

It was a completely absurd plan, and it involved an object he had never before thought to associate with the Soul Lamps of Ancient Realm cultivators.

Even now, it seemed like something completely improbable.

Finally, though, it reached the point where he couldn't hold back. He just had to try, so, eyes flickering, he slapped his bag of holding... causing a bronze lamp to suddenly fly out!

This bronze lamp was none other than the one he had acquired from the temple hall in the ruins of the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple, the same treasure from which he had acquired his Immortal meridian, that now contained a flame from the Essence of Divine Flame.

Holding the bronze lamp in hand, Meng Hao took a deep breath and then slowly walked toward the wall of mist up ahead. When Fang Daohong and Fang Linhe caught sight of the bronze lamp, they gaped in shock. Were it not for the fact that Meng Hao held their lives firmly in his hand, they would most certainly be incapable of holding back from laughing at Meng Hao's apparent insanity.

However, their expressions quickly changed to ones of open-mouthed astonishment, and they began to tremble uncontrollably.

As Meng Hao neared the mists, rumbling sounds suddenly filled the air. Strange colors flashed as everything shook. The mists began to fall apart, churning in an unprecedented fashion. All of the mists inside of the ancestral land seemed to be going crazy, and immediately, more mist began to surge out from every nook and cranny, making it so that the entire ancestral land became just like the Misty Heaven Vault.

The mist was trembling, almost as if in fear!

Meng Hao's bronze lamp seemed to have cast the entire ancestral land into a state of awe, and the mists almost appeared to be prostrating themselves in worship!

As for the mists directly in front of Meng Hao, as soon as the bronze lamp neared them, they seemed to be torn apart with domineering force. It didn't matter who this place previously belonged to, or who used to dwell here, as of this moment, everything was submitting to the bronze lamp.

Amidst the rumbling, the mists were torn apart... and parted down the middle!

A path was carved out... which led straight ahead!!

It was a huge path, at the end of which, shockingly... was an enormous, pitch-black temple hall!!

This sight caused Fang Daohong's and Fang Linhe's minds to reel, and their hearts to lurch with enormous waves of shock. They trembled violently, filled with unspeakable astonishment. Even knowing that Meng Hao had taken control of the Dao Guardsman hadn't turned their world upside down as much as the scene that was playing out in front of them right now!

The Seventh Patriarch had been on the verge of turning away and leaving.

"Impossible!!" he said, voice quavering.

He began to tremble, and his mind filled with roaring and he almost fell out of the sky in shock. Even his cultivation base was now somewhat unstable.

# Chapter 960: Whose Soul Lamp Is It!?

He panted, staring dead at the bronze lamp in Meng Hao's hand. The lamp caused his scalp to grow numb, and terror washed through him as a shocking question filled his mind.

"That Soul Lamp... whose is it?!?!"

The mist in the Misty Heaven Vault seethed, spreading out to fill the entire ancestral land. The Ancient Burial Grounds, the Nine Nethermountains, the Quasi-Dao Patriarch Tombs, and even the Field of Magic Enlightenment were all submerged in endless mist.

The lands almost looked like they had become a sea of mist, concealing all, casting everything into shadow. The area around Meng Hao was the only area of light, which was illuminated by the glow of the Essence of Divine Flame.

Meng Hao was panting, and his heart pounded even more strongly than Fang Daohong and Fang Linhe, or the astonished Seventh Patriarch.

Taking out the bronze Soul Lamp had been a simple experiment, and in fact, even Meng Hao had assumed the idea to be laughable and virtually impossible.

He had always thought that it was nothing more than an ancient bronze lamp.... He had never, ever thought to compare it to the Soul Lamp of an Ancient Realm cultivator.

But now, as he looked around at the churning mists, at the path that had been ripped open in front of him, and the tunnel leading toward the pitch-black temple up ahead, his heart pounded with unprecedented intensity.

"This Soul Lamp... whose is it?!?!" That was the mind blowing question that rolled around in Meng Hao's mind as he thought back to that year in the temple hall when he had acquired the bronze lamp.

How many years had it been there...?

He had kept the lamp alive with his own blood, and when it was extinguished, he had absorbed the black smoke that it emitted. That was

what... had caused him to become different than everyone else, to have a true Immortal meridian inside of him.

"It's actually a Soul Lamp. A mere lamp contains such shocking, domineering power that even this Fang Clan ancestral land has no choice but to submit to it!"

"If this lamp is so powerful... then whatever almighty being created it must be unbelievably powerful!!" Meng Hao was panting at this unbelievable turn of events. It truly was a matter that couldn't be pondered too deeply, for the more he thought about it, the more it astonished him.

"Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple..." Meng Hao's eyes glowed with intense light as a new sense of determination filled him and he made a firm resolution. "I definitely need to go to the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite!" The only clues to the story behind this lamp, which he had found in the temple hall in the ruins of Planet South Heaven's Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite, seemed to lay in the four words 'Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite'.

From the way things looked, grabbing this bronze lamp that year had changed his entire fate in life!!

Nearby, Fang Daohong and Fang Linhe were looking on with numbed scalps, and minds that felt as if they were being struck by lightning. Their jaws hung open and their eyes were wide.

They simply couldn't believe or even think of words to describe what they were seeing. It was as if they had been struck dumb. Then, they saw Meng Hao take a deep breath, tightly grasp the bronze lamp in his hands, and step toward the path. That image seemed to shake them to their senses.

"How could this be happening...?" thought Fang Daohong as he quietly watched Meng Hao walking toward the path in the mist. He felt like he was in an illusion, a dream or fantasy in his own mind.

Fang Linhe punched himself hard in the chest, and the resulting pain caused his eyes to widen with surprise. He felt like the world had been

turned upside down. Up ahead was the necropolis of the first generation Patriarch, a place no one had ever entered, and yet Meng Hao... had casually pulled out a bronze lamp, and then... walked right into the mists.

Fang Linhe shuddered, and he was suddenly struck with a feeling of rejoicing, rejoicing at the fact that he had attacked someone as terrifyingly inhuman as this, and yet was still alive.

Up in midair, the Seventh Patriarch was also panting. In terms of both his inward disposition and his external expression, he was incapable of maintaining his calm. It didn't matter that his cultivation base was at the peak of the Ancient Realm, he was still profoundly shaken by Meng Hao.

"Eldest Brother has a 1 Essence Dao Realm cultivation base and the status of Fang Clan's Earth Patriarch, and yet he could only advance 39 steps into the mists. However, the lamp that kid is holding can actually scrape a path clean through the Misty Heaven Vault all the way to the necropolis!"

"If you calculate that path based on the number of steps that can be taken, it must be at least 1,000!!

"It's just a soul lamp, and yet it even exceeds the power of 1 Essence. What was the cultivation base of the person who formed that Soul Lamp? In terms of level, were they a 6 Essences Paragon? Or perhaps a 9 Essences Paragon?!"

"Impossible, in all the Nine Mountains and Seas, there aren't even any 9 Essences Paragons at all! The only people who ever entered the 9 Essences level of the Dao Realm were those three Paragons from the legendary age of the Immortal Ancient, during that Heaven-shaking, Earth-rocking war!"

"I shouldn't even be thinking about 9 Essences. Even 7 Essences Paragons don't exist in the Nine Mountains and Seas. The highest cultivation base in this day and age is only 6 Essences!" The shock roiling in the Seventh Patriarch's heart was impossible to describe. He looked at the scene of Meng Hao striding down the path in the mists with lamp in hand. Then, he took a deep breath, and his eyes began to shine with a strange light.

There was no greediness that arose within him. Since Meng Hao possessed the bronze lamp, he was qualified to enter the Misty Heaven Vault. To others, however, this would be the end of the line.

Although the Seventh Patriarch couldn't help but look covetously at the bronze lamp, he did not attempt to snatch it away. He was an elder of the Clan, and furthermore, he was one of its guardian entities. Besides, he had his principles when it came to objects belonging to the members of the Junior generation.

Those were the clan rules!

They were rules that allowed the clan to multiply and grow, and to withstand the test of time!

Members of the same generation could fight and steal destiny from each other. Such things were permitted. But even if the Heavens did not care whether members of the Elder generation stole from the Juniors, it was something that was completely prohibited by the clan rules.

Although some people might brave the risks and do such things, the Seventh Patriarch was not that type of person.

"From the time the ancient first generation Patriarch passed away in meditation until now, this is... the first time his necropolis has become visible! Could it be that the One Thought Stellar Transformation will make a reappearance in the Ninth Mountain and Sea!?" The Seventh Patriarch looked at Meng Hao's back as he walked off into the distance. He suddenly felt a premonition deep within him.

"His future prospects might not just be limited to the Ninth Mountain and Sea! Perhaps he can lead the Fang Clan to new heights of glory!"

Back on the path in the Misty Heaven Vault, Meng Hao's heart was pounding. He held the bronze lamp in his hand as he slowly walked forward through the mists. Although it appeared as if there was an empty void beneath his feet, the ground was as solid as ever as he trod upon it.

The light of flame flickered out from the bronze lamp, and the mists on each side of him churned. Any obstructions ahead dissipated as Meng Hao

continued onwards.

As he passed in further, the mists closed up behind him, blocking off the path. Any outsider, including Fang Daohong and Fang Linhe, and even the Seventh Patriarch, gradually lost sight of Meng Hao as he disappeared into the mists.

Fang Daohong and Fang Linhe exchanged a look, and could see the shock in each other's eyes, as well as... the astonishment.

Their life or death was in Meng Hao's hands, so to them, the more powerful Meng Hao got, the less chance they ever had to escape. However... as he increased in power, their future prospects... actually grew even more limitless.

"Perhaps Fang Xiushan has inadvertently given the two of us a chance to achieve a meteoric rise to success!!" Fang Daohong said hoarsely.

Fang Linhe took a deep breath and nodded. "If Fang Hao can get some good fortune in the necropolis, if he can become the only person in the clan who can cultivate the One Thought Stellar Transformation, then his future prospects are limitless!"

Their eyes shone with determination as they sat cross-legged outside of the Misty Heaven Vault, acting as Dharma Protectors as they waited for Meng Hao to emerge.

Back in the Misty Heaven Vault, the pitch-black temple at the end of the long path didn't seem to be very far away. However, Meng Hao ended up walking for a long time.

One day. Two days. Three days.

On the third day, Meng Hao finally began to get close to the pitch-black temple. Although the temple was still about three thousand meters away, he knew.. that he was in the region of the necropolis!

Rising up above the pitch-black temple was an enormous statue of a middle-aged man. He wore a Daoist robe, and had an expression that was lofty and imposing, yet exposed no trace of anger, and even contained a hint of debonaire. He sat there cross-legged, eyes closed as if he were

doing breathing exercises. It was merely a statue, but when you looked at it, it almost looked alive.

He looked somewhat similar to Meng Hao, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that all members of the Fang Clan had some features similar to this statue.

That was because he was none other than the first generation Patriarch.

He was the peerless, breathtaking man who had risen to become the first Patriarch of a clan!

Eighteen enormous coiling dragons could be seen on the steps leading up to the temple, each of which emanated an archaic feel. It almost looked like those eighteen dragons were actually supporting the entire necropolis with their bodies.

Simply put, it was a majestic sight!

Meng Hao's heart trembled as he looked at the huge temple; he knew that this was the final resting place of the first generation Patriarch!

The first generation Patriarch was how the Fang Clan had come to be. It was because of him that the powerful Fang Clan currently existed in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, and there was no end to the legends and myths about him that circulated in the clan.

There was a legend that the first generation Patriarch acquired the bloodline power of the Fang Clan in the Ruins of Immortality, and had followed Lord Li in his campaign to subjugate the Ninth Mountain and Sea to quell the chaos and unify all!

There was another story that the first generation Patriarch didn't actually die, that he had lived a fifth life, in which he disappeared to live a carefree existence.

There were various legends that spun in Meng Hao's mind. He took a deep breath as he passed the 3,000-meter mark, approaching the necropolis itself. When he neared the steps, he looked up at the huge temple doors and bowed deeply.

"Junior generation Fang Clan member Fang Hao extends greetings, first generation Patriarch!"

As his words echoed, the temple began to tremble, and the ornately decorated temple doors began to slowly open!

It was in that exact moment that... outside of the ancestral land, outside of Planet East Victory, Fan Dong'er slammed into the Door of Immortality above the Ninth Sea, causing the door to slowly begin to open. Boundless Immortal light was set free, washing over Fan Dong'er, causing her to gradually become translucent. The holiness that she exuded grew even more intense.

She was already beautiful, but as of this moment, her beauty was beyond compare.

The cultivators of the Nine Seas God World stared at her intently, for they knew... that the critical moment had arrived.

Now was the time to see exactly how many Immortal meridians Fan Dong'er would open!

It wasn't just the Nine Seas God World cultivators who were watching closely. All the other sects and clans were using various methods to observe exactly what happened with Fan Dong'er!

The old Dao Realm woman stood there quietly, looking up at Fan Dong'er with a slight smile, eyes gleaming with anticipation.

# Chapter 961: Necropolis

Above the Ninth Sea, the Door of Immortality opened, and boundless Immortal light emanated out, completely bathing Fan Dong'er. At the same time, enormous quantities of Immortal qi exploded out from the door and bored into her body.

When the Door of Immortality opens, so do Immortal meridians. Every person is different, so the number of Immortal meridians that can be opened depends on a variety of aspects.

Take Pill Demon for example. Although the moment of his true Immortal Ascension did not come with any display of Immortal meridians, that was because he was the first true Immortal of the era. Therefore, he had gained the approval of all the Nine Mountains and Seas, and his name was engraved upon the Immortal scroll.

Those who used Immortality Illumination Vines to become true Immortals were also approved by the Nine Mountains and Seas, and their names were also recorded on the Immortal scroll, although they were viewed as lacking some of the destiny of Heaven and Earth that Pill Demon had.

However, at its root, cultivation is about defying the Heavens and contending for control of fate. The path to Immortality is one of ascension through defiance of the Heavens.

As far as Meng Hao was concerned, if he succeeded in becoming a true Immortal without using an Immortality Illumination Vine, and without acquiring the Immortal destiny to gain the approval to become a true Immortal, then his true Immortality would be completely domineering!

He would be an overbearing true Immortal who everyone had to acknowledge, whether they wanted to or not!

Currently, Immortal qi raged above the Ninth Sea. Everyone watched as Fan Dong'er's body emitted scintillating light, and her aura exploded with power.

10 meridians. 20 meridians. 30 meridians.... The light which emanated out from her grew more intense, and shocking images like that of dragons or phoenixes swirled around her!

40 meridians. 60 meridians. 80 meridians.... Rumbling filled the air and shook the hearts of all onlookers as she reached 90 meridians! She was now the complete center of attention, and yet, wasn't done yet!

91 meridians. 93 meridians. In the end... she opened 96 meridians!

The entire Ninth Sea was completely astonished!

As the Door of Immortality faded away, Fan Dong'er hovered there in midair, her 96 Immortal meridians emanating Immortal power. She could sense that she had been thoroughly remolded, and was now vastly more powerful than before.

She looked out into the starry sky in the direction of Planet East Victory.

"Meng Hao.... I'm a true Immortal now, and when I utilize the Ninth Sea Immortality Incantation, I can double my power. There is still a fight to be had between us, so I hope you're able to keep up with the current generation."

At almost the same moment that Fan Dong'er opened 96 Immortal meridians, back in the Fang Clan ancestral land on Planet East Victory, within the mist, Meng Hao was holding the bronze lamp aloft as he stepped into the open door of the necropolis.

He was now entering a place... that no one had ever entered from the moment the first generation Patriarch passed away in meditation until now! The necropolis!

As he entered, he looked up and saw a field of twinkling stars. There was also a huge mountain, which was surrounded by four planets. Next to the mountain was a starry sea.

It was the Ninth Mountain, the Ninth Sea, and the four planets.

That was the ceiling of the enormous hall in which he found himself. Starlight glittered down onto a middle-aged man who sat atop a woven

rush mat. His face was calm, without the slightest hint that he might be dead. And yet, his entire person emanated an aura of rot.

He was almost like a statue that had been sitting there motionless for countless years.

He wore a simple robe and a scholar's hat. He sat there cross-legged, his lips turned up in a slight smile. In his hand he held a scroll of bamboo slips, and a glowing sphere of starlight hovered around him, flickering.

In addition to this, there was a pill furnace, without any cover. Inside of the furnace was a swirling mass of seven-colored mist, making it impossible to see clearly whatever was inside. Above the pill furnace, occupying Meng Hao's entire field of view, was... a dragon.

It was... a dragon cast from bronze, its long body twisted around the columns that supported the roof. Cracks spread out from the areas where the dragon's claws sank into the column, and its tail disappeared into the darkness. Its head hung down directly above the pill furnace, into which it was gazing with an expression of greed. Its mouth was open as if it were about to consume whatever was inside the pill furnace.

The bronze dragon was incredibly realistic, even down to the scales, making it almost look alive. Meng Hao even noticed several areas on the dragon's body where the scales were severely damaged, as if they were scars earned from hundreds of battles.

As he looked at everything around him, Meng Hao began to pant. He almost couldn't believe that this was merely a bronze casting of a dragon; to him, it almost felt as if it were a real, flesh-and-blood dragon.

One of the reasons for that sensation was that when he looked at it, the Immortal meridian inside of him began to pulse violently and emit an aura of longing, as if it wanted to completely absorb it!

Meng Hao hesitated for a moment. In a situation like this, he would not act rashly. He scanned the huge temple hall, and then decided to skirt the pill furnace and head over to the man sitting on the rush mat. He looked at him sitting there meditating, and realized that he looked exactly like the statue outside.

"First generation Patriarch...." murmured Meng Hao. As he looked at the man, his blood began to thrum, as if it were a resonance between the two of them.

After a long moment, Meng Hao knelt down and kowtowed to the man.

"Fang Hao of the Junior generation offers greetings, Patriarch," he said, his voice sincere. Although he might have a bit of enmity toward the Fang Clan, he only had feelings of respect for the first generation Patriarch who had founded the clan.

After kowtowing, Meng Hao got to his feet and looked at the sphere of starlight hovering around of the first generation Patriarch. Deep inside the light, he could just barely make out a fingernail-sized asteroid.

As the starlight entered his eyes, Meng Hao's breathing sped up a bit. From what he could tell, this object... was probably a manifestation of the One Thought Stellar Transformation.

He tried to reach out and grab the starlight, but no matter how he attempted to take ahold of it, it did no good, as if the sphere were completely ignoring him. It just continued to orbit the first generation Patriarch.

Meng Hao thought for a moment, then abandoned any attempts to force the matter. After all, the sphere of starlight was hovering around the first generation Patriarch, so any attempt to forcibly take it away would probably involve making contact with the Patriarch's corpse, a level of disrespect that Meng Hao wouldn't show.

He took a few steps back, looking around and then floating up into the air to take a closer look at the places where the bronze dragon's claws sank into the column. After a moment, he took in a deep breath, and his expression was one of complete disbelief.

He then sank back down to the ground and glanced around vigilantly, his heart pounding.

Moments ago, he had been able to determine that the cracks had not been carved there, but had occurred naturally, as if... on some day in the

past, a real dragon had actually latched onto the column with its claws.

As he continued to gaze at the bronze dragon, images began to appear in his mind. In the vision, he saw the hall, empty and peaceful. Then a dragon charged in, swirling through hall and then wrapping around one column after another. Its claws pierced into the columns as it lowered its head, eyes flickering with greed as it attempted to consume the pill furnace. It was in that moment that a powerful force rippled out, and the dragon died instantly, transforming into nothing more than a bronze statue.

As soon as Meng Hao experienced this vision, he was filled with shock.

"This necropolis sure is full of strange things...." he thought, blinking. He looked back at the first generation Patriarch, then was struck by a sudden impulse. Meng Hao walked past him, then sat down across from him, back facing the Patriarch, looking out into the hall.

His scalp instantly went numb as he realized that from this position, he could directly see the dragon's chin, and the lower part of its body. Furthermore, it appeared that... if he were powerful enough, he could use a single finger to cause the entire bronze dragon to explode.

He raised his hand and pointed in that very manner, then stood up and followed the line that his finger had pointed at. When he arrived at the place where that path intersected with the dragon's chin, and examined it more closely, he could sense something that caused his mind to tremble.

He was almost frightened out of his senses when that specific spot on the dragon's chin rippled as if with magic; apparently there was still the residue of some sort of magical technique, left behind in this spot.

That indicated... that this was the point of impact that had led to the bronze dragon being turned into a statue!

Meng Hao slowly turned around to face the first generation Patriarch. Mouth parched and dry, he forced a smile onto his face and then clasped hands and bowed.

"Patriarch," he began carefully, "I am a member of the Fang Clan, the

sole descendant of the direct bloodline. I'm the only heir. Do you get what that means, sir?! Basically, if I die, then the direct bloodline will be gone!!

"Sir, you are an exalted and magnanimous person, so, um... well, I'm here, not to disturb you, sir, but rather, to acquire a legacy so that I can perform meritorious services for the clan!"

Meng Hao's speech was met with silence, so after a moment, he backed up, thought for a moment, then looked over at the pill furnace in hesitation.

"Whatever it was that caused this incredibly powerful dragon to feel such greed must definitely be a precious treasure.... Who knows how this dragon managed to charge its way in here, but it shows that it's definitely not weak. Most likely, it actually came here before the Misty Heaven Vault was created, and before the first generation Patriarch perished. The fact that the first generation Patriarch caused the dragon to remain in the necropolis shows just how powerful it was."

"And the item it desired...." Meng Hao's heart thumped as he hesitated, torn about what to do. Finally, he looked up and yet again clasped hands to the first generation Patriarch.

"Patriarch, my Bloodline Gatebeam rose up 30,000 meters, making me fit to be called the number one figure of the Fang bloodline right now. That indicates... that you and I have a very close connection, grandfather." He blinked.

"Considering our close relationship, if you were still alive, sir, well, I think you would be very happy to see me. I have a pretty good personality, and an even temper. I'm very obedient, and always follow instructions. Pretty much everyone likes me." Meng Hao slapped his chest proudly as he described himself.

"Patriarch, you're a member of the Elder generation, so to see someone of the Junior generation after so many years, especially someone as outstanding as myself, must surely make you very happy. You definitely would want a member of the Junior generation like me to be handsomely rewarded."

"I actually want nothing else than the contents of that pill furnace. Why don't you give it to me, okay? Oh, and the One Thought Stellar Transformation? I'd love to continue to develop it. Right, about that dragon, I'll clear it out for you, how about that!?" Meng Hao, feeling emboldened, and yet also gritting his teeth, slowly approached the pill furnace and looked at the seven-colored mist inside. He then gently blew on the mist.

As soon as his breath touched the mist, Meng Hao saw that inside of the pill furnace was a jade plate, upon which was a blob of seven-colored liquid.

The moment he saw the seven-colored liquid, all of the hair on his body stood on end. As a Grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy, it didn't matter that he had never seen a liquid like this before, his intuition instantly informed him that this was something that could not be consumed by cultivators.

It contained a shocking, violent aura which indicated that any cultivator who consumed it would be killed instantly.

It was at this moment that a thrumming sound could suddenly be heard from within his bag of holding. The jade box inside shattered, and the two Nirvana Fruits that had been given to him by the Grand Elder, the ones that belonged to the first generation Patriarch, suddenly flew out of their own volition. Seemingly striving to outdo each other, they shot toward the seven-colored liquid inside the pill furnace.

It was as if the first fruit to touch the liquid would be completely restored!

# Chapter 962: The Number One Person of Immortal Destiny!

It happened so suddenly that Meng Hao could only watch with wide eyes as the two Nirvana Fruits shot toward the pill furnace. The one that took the lead was the one which Meng Hao had spent so many spirit stones on, and was on the verge of already being completely restored.

Meng Hao's mind filled with roaring as he suddenly realized that the seven-colored liquid must have the same function as Spirit Elixir. It wasn't meant to be consumed, it was meant to be used to restore Nirvana Fruits.

A Yin aura of death could be sensed within the liquid, an aura that represented the lack of life and destruction. The Nirvana Fruits had been withered for eons, and were essentially dead. However, it seemed that when they touched the seven-colored liquid, the Yin death aura would reach a pinnacle in which life force suddenly appeared!

That life force represented the restoration of the Nirvana Fruits.

The violent surge of energy from the seven-colored liquid would replenish the Nirvana Fruits, leading to a rapid increase in life force.

Meng Hao's mind trembled; the first thought that entered his mind was that he must not under any circumstances allow the Nirvana Fruit which he had so painstakingly worked on to succeed right now. If it did, the losses he would sustain as a result would be too incredible.

He used all the power he could muster to reach out and grab the Nirvana Fruit, which was just on the verge of touching the seven-colored liquid. Even as he did this, the other Nirvana Fruit that he had ignored all this time melt down into the liquid.

In that instant, blinding beams of seven-colored light stabbed out, and a thick, seven-colored mist spread out to cover the entire pill furnace.

The other Nirvana Fruit, which Meng Hao now held in his hand, seemed to calm down, and ceased moving. Meng Hao quickly tossed it into his bag of holding, and then backed up several paces, his facial expression

fluctuating with anxiety.

He looked over at the first generation Patriarch, then back at the seven-colored mist in the pill furnace, and began muttering to himself in uncertainty.

"No one has ever been to this necropolis before.... Therefore, nobody knows that the Spirit Extract within the pill furnace can provoke such a reaction from the Nirvana Fruits.... This is the necropolis of the first generation Patriarch, and the Nirvana Fruits belong to him.

"I wonder if, after the fusion is complete, the Nirvana Fruit could be consumed?" Meng Hao hesitated for a moment; currently, he couldn't see anything in particular inside of the pill furnace's mist.

"If I can consume it, then it would definitely be a big win for me!" Meng Hao's eyes shone with bright light.

"Even if I can't consume it, losing one of the Nirvana Fruits isn't completely unacceptable." With that, Meng Hao took a deep breath and calmed himself down. Then, he looked up at the bronze dragon.

This time, it seemed different than before. Its greedy expression had changed into one of fear, and instead of its mouth being open in preparation to consume the pill furnace, it now looked as if someone had violently wrenched its mouth open with the purpose of distilling the essence of its life force.

That essence seemed to be formed from the frenzied terror it had experienced in the moment of death. Then, after it died, the Yin death power formed together... merging to create a drop of liquid filled with boundless Yin death and violence. That drop had then descended onto the jade plate in the pill furnace.

Meng Hao wasn't sure whether or not he was mistaken, but it seemed that as soon as the Nirvana Fruit merged into the liquid and the dense mist filled the pill furnace, some sort of natural law seemed to have been nullified, which made the bronze dragon's expression change again. This time, it seemed almost relieved, as if it had experienced a release.

Next, cracks suddenly spread out across the bronze dragon's body. They rapidly covered its entire body, to the point where the dragon gradually... began to dissipate right before his eyes!

He stared in shock, and took a deep breath as he backed up.

He looked on as the bronze dragon began to fade, transforming into strands of mist that maintained the shape of a dragon as they intertwined with each other and began to swirl around the hall.

When it got close to Meng Hao, the misty dragon head looked at him thoughtfully. Eventually, a gleam of appreciation could be seen in its eyes, after which it shot forward and slammed headfirst Meng Hao!

It instantly began to fuse into him, transforming into Immortal qi, which then surged into his Immortal meridian.

Meng Hao's mind trembled, and his Immortal meridian shook violently. It even began to resemble the appearance of a dragon as it madly absorbed the misty dragon's Immortal qi.

Cracking sounds could be heard as his Immortal meridian solidified even further, and Meng Hao's true Immortal aura grew stronger and stronger.

A strange gleam appeared in his eyes. His breath came in ragged pants as he experienced the sensation of the true Immortal Realm more strongly than he ever had before. Previously, he had been at the point of needing a hundred days to completely solidify his Immortal meridian, but now it was proceeding much faster than before.

In the time it takes an incense stick to burn, rumbling filled Meng Hao's body as his Immortal meridian was completely formed!!

Immortal light pulsed out from him, and Immortal qi multiplied rapidly, circulating through his body, causing his Cultivation base to change completely.

He had been waiting for this moment for a long time. His journey had started in the lands of South Heaven, in the moment that he witnessed his master Pill Demon reach true Immortal Ascension. That was when his

anticipation had begun to build!

From this moment on, he was not a mortal, but an Immortal.

During the Daoist Societies' trial by fire, Meng Hao had seen the glimmer of hope. After arriving on Planet East Victory, his anticipation deepened. Originally, he thought it would take a bit longer, but now, in the ancestral land, within the necropolis, he acquired the vast, heavenly good fortune to complete that final step into true Immortality.

Were Meng Hao not in this necropolis, which was part of the Ruins of Immortality, then Immortal Tribulation would currently be forming up above, and a Door of Immortality would appear.

Only by bashing open that door would he be able to make the final leap to success by opening the rest of his Immortal meridians.

However at this moment, the Door of Immortality had no way to sense Meng Hao's aura, no way to realize that he was about to step into the Immortal Realm. Therefore, it did not appear.

Because of that... Meng Hao's cultivation base had actually reached an indescribably shocking level.

Lucky breaks like this were something incredibly rare. To be able to achieve true Immortal Ascension like this required three criteria; to achieve Immortality without the use of an Immortality Illumination Vine, to be in a place with both a necropolis and a piece of the Ruins of Immortality, and for that place to have sufficient Immortal qi.

Though it seemed that the three stipulations would be a simple matter to meet, it was actually incredibly difficult. Normally speaking, it would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to meet the first requirement, not to mention the other two!!

They were so difficult that, although you couldn't say they were impossible to meet, they were definitely extremely, extremely unlikely. In fact, in the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea, Meng Hao was the only person who, by a series of chance occurrences, had managed to achieve it!

Perhaps in some of the other Eight Mountains and Seas, there had been

other people throughout the years who attempted to do the same thing. However, none of those people could compare to Meng Hao. That was because he had started out with a foundation for true Immortality, which was the Immortal meridian that had been given to him by none other than the bronze lamp!

It was an authentic Immortal meridian, exceeding that of all other Immortals, making him... a true Immortal among true Immortals!

Meng Hao was actually the first person in all of the Nine Mountains and Seas to come across such a lucky break!

However many extra Immortal meridians he had now would remain with him when he underwent his Immortal Tribulation on the outside, and would not superimpose with those Immortal meridians he acquired, but would increase their number!

All souls had three spiritual aspects and seven physical soul aspects, with ten meridians composing each of the ten vessels. Immortals with 100 meridians had three spiritual soul aspects, seven physical soul aspects, and ten soul vessels. People who exceeded 100 meridians were extremely rare in the Nine Mountains and Seas. In fact, such people existed virtually in legend only. Each meridian that exceeded 100 resulted in an additional soul vessel!

Meng Hao's body filled with rumbling as his first Immortal Meridian was completed. Furthermore, thanks to the misty dragon, a second Immortal meridian was also beginning to take shape. As soon as it appeared, it began to solidify.

Good preparation leads to success. Other Chosen had already prepared themselves to their utmost limits, so, when they stepped into true Immortality, it would be a shocking event. As for Meng Hao, he had taken himself to be well prepared, but now, with this sudden lucky break, he was accumulating even more potential.

If any outsider became aware of this kind of extra preparation, it would shock the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea.

At the same time that Meng Hao sat there cross-legged, madly absorbing

Immortal qi and forming a second Immortal meridian, clouds were forming in the starry sky outside of Planet East Victory. It started as a mist that rapidly formed into Tribulation Clouds alongside a shocking Door of Immortality.

A Door of Immortality had been floating over the Ninth Sea just a short time ago, and now, one materialized over East Victory and was slowly descending toward the planet.

Countless people saw it, and it immediately led to a complete uproar. Fang Clan members looked at it excitedly, especially the clan Elders.

“True Immortal Tribulation!” the Grand Elder gasped, eyes shining brightly.

The descent of the Door of Immortality was not because of Meng Hao; rather, it was because of... Fang Wei!

Beneath the ancestral mansion, Fang Xiushan awakened from meditation, body trembling, expression one of excitement as he looked over at the stone wall next to him. Suddenly, the stone wall opened up to reveal a tall figure striding out, who was none other than Fang Wei.

His left eye was pitch black, a darkness that seemed to contain death itself. His right eye was completely white, as if it contained the vitality of daytime. His entire person radiated the aura of true Immortality.

His expression was sober and serious as he simultaneously exuded the aura of reincarnation and the icy coldness of the Yellow Springs.

“Wei’er,” said Fang Xiushan excitedly, “you....”

“Dad, I succeeded,” was the reply. Fang Wei immediately blasted a hole in the ceiling of the chamber and then flew out into the air above.

Fang Xiushan tilted his head back and began to laugh loudly. Seeing Fang Wei fly out filled his heart with excitement, and he knew that as of this moment, all of his violations of clan rules were no longer important, and could easily be swept under the rug.

Indeed, it really was true. As Fang Wei shot up into the sky, the Grand

Elder caught sight of Fang Xiushan and gave him a deep look, although he didn't say anything.

At the moment, Fang Wei was the only person flying up in midair. Seeing this from their positions down below, the Elders of his bloodline also flew up to act as Dharma Protectors. At the same time, the Fang Clan's grand spell formation was also activated, making Fang Wei the center of all attention on Planet East Victory.

Down in the stony cavern beneath the ancestral mansion, the other six Patriarchs stirred and began to observe the scene. Although they didn't appear in person, their divine senses locked down the whole planet.

As of this moment, Fang Wei was the focus of all eyes!

Fang Xi stood within the crowds, fists clenched, eyes filled with defiance.

"Fang Hao should be the one reaching true Immortal Ascension!"

"Fang Hao, Coz, I hope you're okay, and I hope you know that Fang Wei... succeeded with his Immortal Ascension and is now preparing to attack the Door of Immortality and open his Immortal meridians!"

Rumbling filled the Heavens as the Door of Immortality descended. All of the clans and sects in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were using various methods to observe what was happening on Planet East Victory.

If you didn't count Pill Demon, Fang Wei was the second person in this generation after Fan Dong'er... to become a true Immortal cultivator!

"Fan Dong'er opened 96 Immortal meridians. I wonder... how many Immortal meridians Fang Wei will open?!" That was the question on the minds of all the people watching throughout the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Fang Wei looked like a shooting star as he soared up into the sky toward the rumbling Immortal Tribulation. Lightning crashed around him as he roared, eyes filled with determination as he completely ignored the Immortal Tribulation and focused completely on the Door of Immortality within the cloud.

"My goal is to open 98 meridians!" he murmured softly. "After I have my

Immortal meridians, Fang Hao... you will be nothing more than an ant to me. Your two Nirvana Fruits will make me, Fang Wei, the number one person within my generation!

"However, I'm still going to crush you to death to sever the Devil in my heart!" Fang Wei's eyes shone with pride and arrogance as he contemplated his desire to... return to the position he had occupied before the rising of the East Ascension Sun... Prince Wei of the Fang Clan!

# Chapter 963: Fang Hao, Come Out and Fight!

As Meng Hao meditated in seclusion in the necropolis, having completed his first Immortal meridian and moved on to his second, the Door of Immortality rumbled above Planet East Victory, and Immortal Tribulation descended.

Fang Wei flew up above the land, heading into the tribulation, the focus of all eyes, not only on Planet East Victory, but in all of the sects and clans, who used various different methods to bear witness to Fang Wei becoming a true Immortal.

Fan Dong'er had opened 96 meridians, causing widespread shock. Now that Fang Wei had reached Immortal Ascension, everyone was considering the question of how many meridians he would open. His Immortal Ascension represented the potential rise of a new almighty figure within the Fang Clan.

As everything rumbled, the Immortal Tribulation battered Fang Wei, and he roared. Lightning crashed down, and he let it. The aura of reincarnation swirled around him, and the will of the Yellow Springs surged strongly.

Furthermore, a bizarre light shone in his eyes. The left one was black, the right one white, which was the manifestation of the successful cultivation of One Breath Yellow Springs Dao. As for the aura of reincarnation that swirled around him, that was from the One Thought Reincarnation Incantation!

These were signature divine abilities of the Fang Clan, and shockingly, he had cultivated two of them!

Amidst the rumbling, Fang Wei slammed into the door of Immortality, immediately opening it a crack. Boundless Immortal light began to spill out, and the Immortal tribulation grew more intense, covering everything in the sky.

Time passed. Soon, three days had gone by.

During those three days, Fang Wei's image shocked everyone. He continued to completely ignore the Immortal Tribulation, which didn't seem capable of pushing him back even the least bit. In fact, he even seemed to be gaining strength from it. Lightning filled the Heavens, and Fang Wei's presence there left everyone astonished.

"Fang Wei is the number one Chosen of the Fang Clan! He's the Fang Clan's Prince Wei!"

"The Immortal Tribulation is going to dissipate! He's about to truly open the Door of Immortality!"

"Fang Wei! Fang Wei!" Everyone in the Fang Clan was excited, and their voices quickly filled the air, turning into sound waves that rolled out in all directions.

Moments later, a shocking boom could be heard as Fang Wei pushed open the Door of Immortality. Immortal light surged out, filling the sky, the blinding beams immediately dispersing the Immortal Tribulation.

The Immortal light wreathed Fang Wei as he threw his head back and let out a long shout. His hair whipped about, and his tall frame grew even more refined as it shed its mortal constraints. He was now stepping into the true Immortal Realm.

At the same time, the Immortal light sent out boundless Immortal qi that surrounded Fang Wei and poured into his body.

Everyone down below was in an uproar as they observed the proceedings. The Grand Elder's eyes shone with brilliant light. Off to the side, Fang Wei's grandfather and Fang Xiushan both looked extremely excited.

20 meridians. 40 meridians. 60 meridians. 80 meridians!

In the space of a few breaths worth of time, Immortal light washed over Fang Wei, and he opened 80 Immortal meridians, causing intense pressure to radiate out. Rumbling echoed out from within him as the Immortal meridians writhed like vicious dragons, and emanated the power of true Immortality.

83 meridians. 87 meridians. 90 meridians!!

The Fang Clan was in a huge commotion, and all observers on Planet East Victory were trembling. The clan members of other clans were all looking at Fang Wei as he rose once again to prominence, opening 90 meridians!

However, things weren't over yet. More shocking rumbling could be heard from within Fang Wei. 91, 92, 93....

When the 96th meridian appeared, there was universal astonishment!

"Fan Dong'er opened 96 meridians, and now Fang Wei has actually done the same thing!"

"He fully deserves to be called a Chosen!"

"He... he actually seems to have a bit of energy left. Just how many resources did Fang Wei pour into his preparations!? This is astonishing!"

Rumbling sounds continue to echo out as the 97th meridian opened inside of Fang Wei!

Fang Xiushan was trembling, and his expression was one of intense excitement. He looked up into the sky and began to laugh heartily. Next to him, Fang Wei's grandfather looked very pleased. Even the Grand Elder appeared to be smiling.

The entire Fang Clan was roused into complete excitement.

However, Fang Wei wasn't satisfied. He remained in the Door of Immortality, surrounded by Immortal light, his cultivation base climbing higher and higher. He continued to rise higher as he suddenly shouted out.

"98th meridian, OPEN!!"

The instant his voice echoed out, a shocking rumbling sound could be heard. In the blink of an eye, his aura leaped exponentially, emitting a terrifying aura as he formed... a 98th meridian!

98 horned dragons appeared around him in the void, swirling gracefully, causing anyone who saw them to begin to pant.

In the moment that the 98th meridian was formed, 10,000 illusory figures appeared in the area surrounding the Door of immortality. They wore armor and held Immortal weapons, and they quickly surrounded Fang Wei and then themselves prostrated in worship.

Everyone on Planet East Victory who saw this couldn't help but gasp, and the cultivators from the other sects and clans were completely shaken.

"The Fang Clan has produced a qilin-like prodigy!"

"98 meridians! It's rare for even one person like that to appear every 10,000 years! Strange signs will appear whenever anyone exceeds 95 meridians, for example, the flying dragons and phoenixes of Fan Dong'er. However, Fang Wei... actually caused 10,000 ancient Immortal warriors to appear!"

"He's been touched by the destiny of the Mountains and Seas! Destiny of the Mountains and Seas is upon him!!"

The Fang Clan was abuzz, and the rest of the Ninth Mountain and Sea was also shaken. Even the Ji Clan on the Ninth Mountain took notice.

As of this moment, Fang Wei was now the number one figure in his generation!

As the Door of Immortality slowly faded away, Fang Wei hovered in midair, his robe as pure as fresh snow, his long hair swirling about. He had been handsome to begin with, but now his demeanor was even more elegant and entrancing. His eyes shone with a pride that looked down on both Heaven and Earth; as of this moment, he made no effort to conceal his cultivation base. He allowed it to explode out, causing the sky to tremble, and Immortal might to shake the land.

"Fang Hao, come out and fight!" he suddenly roared, his words echoing out like thunder. No one had expected these words to be the first things to come out of his mouth.

"Fang Hao, get out here and fight me!" His words echoed back and forth constantly, roaring like thunder.

It was at this point that quite a few people recalled Meng Hao. Actually, in the days following the rise of the East Ascension Sun, the number one Chosen in the clan wasn't Fang Wei, it was Meng Hao!

No one said anything. The entire Fang Clan went quiet. Actually, not many people knew about Meng Hao entering the ancestral land. Most of them had no idea that Meng Hao was not currently inside the premises of the Clan.

Even Fang Wei wasn't aware of the current situation!

As his voice echoed out, the clan went quiet as they waited to see if Meng Hao would come out. Fang Xi was in the crowd, jaw clenched tightly. Finally, he let out a mighty cry bolstered by all of his cultivation base.

"My Coz Fang Hao is in the ancestral land! Once he comes out, you won't need to go looking for him! He'll find you to do battle!" In response to Fang Xi's words, Fang Wei's expression remained the same as ever. However, icy coldness appeared in his eyes as he looked down at Fang Xi.

"Well then, I'll just wait for him to come out!" With that, he shot down toward the ground, appearing just outside the main temple hall, where he sat down cross-legged.

Indeed, like he had said, he was going to wait for Meng Hao to return so that he could fight and kill him!

Even if Meng Hao hadn't achieved true Immortal Ascension yet, Fang Wei would kill him anyway. After all, if Meng Hao didn't achieve true Immortality, naturally he would not be qualified to be Fang Wei's rival. To kill a lesser person such as that would clear his clouded mind.

"You'd better not disappoint me," he thought, the killing intent in his eyes growing as he looked at the temple hall.

The fact that Fang Wei and Meng Hao were soon going to have a decisive battle attracted quite a bit of attention on the part of the rest of the clan. Earlier, many of them had taken a liking to Meng Hao, but now that they had personally watched Fang Wei become a true Immortal, their

hearts wavered.

“Will Fang Hao lose...?”

“How could one even fight against a Chosen like that...?”

The expressions of the direct bloodline members were somewhat gloomy. Only Fang Xi had the utmost confidence in Meng Hao. He stood there, hands clenched into fists, completely sure that Meng Hao would never lose!

Meanwhile, Meng Hao was sitting cross-legged in the necropolis in the ancestral land. He was surrounded by swirling tendrils of mist. The misty dragon's head was now completely absorbed into him, while the body still remained in the necropolis.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as always. He stood there unmoving, and yet, his heart was filled with crashes like that of lightning. Great waves surged through him as his second Immortal meridian solidified with shocking speed.

Ten percent. Twenty percent. Thirty percent.... It was impossible to say how much Immortal qi that bronze dragon's body contained. After all, only the head itself was enough to cause Meng Hao's second Immortal meridian to reach a state of forty percent completion.

It must be stated that Meng Hao's Immortal meridians were different than that of others. Not even Fan Dong'er or Fang Wei's could compare with his at all.

His Immortal meridians were those of a true Immortal among true Immortals!

Each and every one was like a true dragon!

As they formed, they required massive consumption of Immortal qi, to such an extent it was almost unbelievable.

“The more I build up in preparation here, the more I'll be able to explode out later!” Meng Hao performed a double-handed incantation, and rotated his cultivation base, madly absorbing the misty dragon.

Time passed, and the dragon undulated. Meng Hao's second Immortal meridian reached fifty percent, sixty, seventy and finally eighty percent!!

Any onlooker who could see such a thing would be flabbergasted.

Meng Hao trembled as he went all-out to absorb the Immortal qi. His second Immortal meridian rapidly reached ninety percent and then... one hundred percent!

In that moment, popping sounds rang out from within him as his second Immortal meridian solidified completely.

As of this moment, he had two Immortal meridians inside of him, a sort of preparation leading to Immortality that was without compare in the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

"I can keep going!" thought Meng Hao, panting. His heart began to pound; he had long since realized that this opportunity was the greatest good fortune he could have encountered in aid of achieving true Immortal Ascension.

He opened his eyes, and they shone with a strange light. Deep within his pupils, a flame burned, a flame that was... a fiery thirst to become a powerful expert!

"I will... become even more powerful!" He took in a deep breath, and rumbling could be heard as more of the misty dragon poured into him. As he absorbed it, a third Immortal meridian began to form!

"There is now about half a month until I have to leave this place.... When I walk out of the ancestral land, my name... will definitely spread throughout the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea!

"Dad. Mom. I'm going to astonish the entire Fang Clan. I'm going to be the focus of the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea. I know that you're stuck on Planet South Heaven, so... I'm going to make you proud from here!"

Meng Hao's eyes flickered like a blade, filled with loyalty and obsession. Finally, he closed them again.

# Chapter 964: We're Waiting!

Pill Demon opened up a new age, giving rise to a majestic prelude to a long-anticipated 10,000-year-era.

It was a 10,000-year-era that contained endless possibilities, and no one could possibly predict how far these blazings suns of various sects and clans would progress during that time.

Perhaps other blazing suns would appear, and rise up like dark horses!

For example, Wang Tengfei!

After Pill Demon initiated the prologue, Fan Dong'er lifted the curtains, allowing all to clearly see that a new age was upon them.

As for Fang Wei, he was a rising heavenly body in the first act, the center of all attention. His appearance caused everyone to realize that the age of true Immortals... had arrived.

Fan Dong'er's rise to true Immortality shook half of the Ninth Sea, making her instantly famous. Fang Wei's rise to true Immortality sent waves throughout Planet East Victory, and the appearance of 10,000 Immortal warriors bowing in worship to him cause utter astonishment.

However, nobody had predicted that the one who would come after Fan Dong'er and Fang Wei to become the third person to provoke Immortal Tribulation would not be some well-known Chosen from one of the sects or clans. Instead, it was an ordinary member of the Wang Clan... who happened to be located on an asteroid in the starry sky!

The Door of Immortality descended, and amidst the Immortal Tribulation, Immortal qi swirled in the starry sky. The sects and clans were bewildered as they turned their attention in that direction.

Wang Tengfei!

After experiencing shocking changes in his life, he had gained a new level of maturity. He had gone through many ordeals, and death had even appeared on his doorstep, only to pass him by. Wang Tengfei was no longer the perfect young man he had been back on Planet South Heaven.

He was now taciturn, and lacked any sort of arrogance. Because of the many things he had gone through, he ended up achieving great revelations regarding life.

He looked at the Immortal Tribulation and the Door of Immortality, and he chuckled. As he laughed, his eyes shone with obsession. At the same time, he recalled the images of the destruction of his clan on Planet South Heaven. He saw himself falling. He went from being a Chosen to being completely down and out, and in the end, helped the Patriarch fulfill his goal.

Through all of those things, Meng Hao's shadow always seemed to loom over him. It had never faded away and couldn't be blotted out. From the Reliance Sect onward, it was always there....

"Meng Hao...." Wang Tengfei threw his head back and laughed, then flew up into the air toward the Immortal Tribulation. Rumbling could be heard, and the stars trembled. All of the sects and clans were now focused on Wang Tengfei.

Especially... the Wang Clan!

Up to now, they had completely disregarded Wang Tengfei. He was merely from Planet South Heaven's collateral branch of the clan. Now, the clan Elders looked at him, and their hearts quivered.

Wang Tengfei rose up like a blazing sun amidst the Immortal Tribulation. The Door of Immortality opened, and Immortal light exploded out. In the end, he opened 95 Immortal meridians!

95 Immortal meridians didn't match up to Fang Wei, and was one less than Fan Dong'er. Even still, the matter was enough to shock all of the various sects and clans.

That was especially true because of the strange signs that appeared after he opened the 95 meridians. Although observers might not have noticed anything extremely unusual, when the Wang Clan Elders saw it, massive waves of shock rolled through their hearts.

The image that appeared for Wang Tengfei was that of some sort of

heavenly body. It was not something enormous, but rather, very small, and it appeared... on his forehead!

It rotated there, emanating a shocking aura, making it seem as if Wang Tengfei's body was now very different than it had been before.

"That's... the mark of the Ancient God bloodline!!"

"That kid actually awakened the most powerful bloodline of our entire Wang Clan, the Ancient God bloodline!" 1

The entire Wang Clan was sent into a stir, and quite a few people flew out to act as Dharma Protectors.

In a bamboo forest that was a restricted area in the Wang Clan, there was an old man who had reprimanded Wang Mu previously. He currently squatted on a long stalk of bamboo, his body wizened, his expression one of boundless ancientness. Although he normally looked disreputable, right now, he suddenly looked much more serious, and a terrifying light could even be seen in his eyes. 2

He stared out into the stars, his expression somber.

"At long last... a descendant has appeared who is worthy of that jinx's bloodline.... He's definitely better and more powerful than any of the other bastards who have appeared recently."

In the subsequent days, which amounted to a little more than half of a month, the Door of Immortality frequently appeared in various regions throughout the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Zhao Yifan opened it, and were it not for Fang Wei, he would have been the complete center of attention with his 97 Immortal meridians.

Because of him, the Three Great Daoist Societies once again became the focus of all the clans and sects.

After him, Song Luodan also stepped into true Immortality. Taiyang Zi, too, joined their ranks.

Next was Sun Hai, whose final step took him to 90 Immortal meridians. Although it was not an extraordinary number, he wasn't very far behind

all of the others, and could be considered to have made the grade for this era.

Li Ling'er also pushed open the Door of Immortality amidst the Immortal tribulation. She bathed in the Immortal light and opened 96 meridians. This clearly proved that the Four Great Clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea possessed deep resources and great power!

After stepping into true Immortality, all of the Chosen happened to do the same thing. Their eyes turned toward Planet East Victory, as if they were waiting for a certain person!

Fan Dong'er, Fang Wei, and all of the Chosen who had stepped into true Immortality were all the center of attention, and gradually, the sects and clans picked up on what was happening. Even rogue cultivators noticed.

Soon, a rumor began to spread through the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

"The Chosen are all waiting for a cultivator by the name of Meng Hao. He also goes by Fang Hao, and he's a member of the Fang Clan!"

"On Planet South Heaven, he forced all the other Chosen into submission. Then, in the rise of the East Ascension Sun on Planet East Victory, he was the number one figure! He even looked directly into the sun for ten breaths of time!"

"He was the first person Fang Wei wanted to fight after reaching true Immortal Ascension!"

"The reason Fan Dong'er has that corpse floating behind her is because she offended him, and he forced Karma onto her!"

"Supposedly, he's Li Ling'er's future beloved!"

"I heard that Taiyang Zi, Song Luodan, and Wang Mu were all defeated by him!"

"According to the rumors, Zhao Yifan once said that even he wasn't as good as Meng Hao!"

"Rumor has it that he even captured Ji Yin from the Ji Clan!"

"People say that he has a whole stack of promissory notes, and that all

the other Chosen are in massive debt to him!"

"They're all waiting for Meng Hao... to reach Immortal Ascension!"

Meng Hao's name spread throughout the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea, even to Planet South Heaven, and everyone heard about him. Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li stood in the Tower of Tang, looking up into the stars, offering blessings to their son.

Meanwhile, Meng Hao sat in the necropolis in the blessed land. He had already formed, not just three Immortal meridians, but four, and then five! He was now working on his sixth.

The mist dragon was now more than half gone. The necropolis itself was no longer filled with mist. Meng Hao sat there cultivating, and clearly, he wasn't finished.

He wanted something completely unprecedented. He didn't just want to build up preparations. What he wanted was to be able to utterly explode out the instant he entered true Immortality.

He would either do nothing, or would completely amaze people in an unprecedented fashion.

Rumbling filled his body as his sixth meridian reached a state of fifty percent completion. It kept going, soon reaching sixty percent, seventy percent... eighty percent!

Meng Hao had no idea how long he had been inside the necropolis, but he didn't want to waste any time, and kept pushing forward.

Eventually, he reached ninety, and then one hundred percent. After that, boundless energy exploded out from him. Majestic light could be seen, causing his body to become translucent, like crystal. In the blink of an eye, he almost looked like a spirit stone.

In fact, if Meng Hao could see himself right now, he... might just fall in love.

However, six meridians wasn't the end. Meng Hao didn't hesitate for a moment; he immediately began to consolidate the power of his cultivation

base, absorb more power from the mist dragon, and then start a seventh Immortal meridian!

Meng Hao now fully realized that long, long ago, that bronze dragon had been completely terrifying. Were it not, there would not be such a shocking amount of Immortal qi preserved inside of it after the passing of ages.

Soon, the seventh Immortal meridian formed.

Outside of the Heavenly Mist Vault, Fang Daohong and Fang Linhe were waiting, unsure of exactly what was happening inside. All they knew was that not too long after Meng Hao entered the Misty Heaven Vault, the entire ancestral land became a sea of mist.

Up in midair, the Seventh Patriarch watched the changes in the Misty Heaven Vault, and gradually got the sensation that Meng Hao was making a drastic transformation, and was leaping forward to incredible heights.

Time passed. Soon, only three days were left until the ancestral land was scheduled to open. Meng Hao was in the necropolis, his seventh Immortal meridian fully formed. Brilliant light shone from his translucent body, completely illuminating the necropolis.

Meng Hao opened his eyes, and the light that shone out was completely different. There was something profound about it, like moonlight reflected on flowing water. By now, the only thing that remained of the mist dragon was its tail. Although the Immortal qi it contained was as dense as ever, there wasn't much of it left.

"I can still open... another meridian!" His eyes gleamed with madness as he took a deep breath, rotated his cultivation base, and unleashed the power of his seven Immortal meridians. Rumbling could be heard as he absorbed the mist dragon's tail.

His body almost seemed like it was about to explode as the eighth Immortal meridian began to form. An aura began to intensify inside of him, and he actually wasn't sure exactly which Realm he belonged in. However, that didn't matter.

There was only one thought on Meng Hao's mind, and that was to stockpile this power to the utter limits, and form that eighth Immortal meridian!

"If I can succeed with this meridian, then theoretically, in the end, I could open, not 101 Immortal meridians, but 108....

"However, that's just in theory. In reality it might even be possible... to exceed that number!

"No matter what happens, I've worked hard for the true Immortal Realm. I've struggled and have prepared more than anyone else! My Immortal meridians... will definitely exceed everyone else's!

"However, my goal cannot merely be to exceed any other person. My goal... for all eternity... will be to exceed myself!

"To constantly exceed myself, to continually break through my own barriers! I will always walk my own path, all the way to the end!

"Thus, the Dao of Meng Hao is a direction. Freedom! Independence! No cares or worries! What I want, the Heavens shall NOT lack! What I don't want, had BETTER not exist in the Heavens! 3

"Being domineering. Having freedom. This... is the Dao of Meng Hao!" Rumbling filled Meng Hao's body as more Immortal qi rushed in, continuing to form the eighth meridian.

Ten percent. Thirty percent. Fifty percent....

Two days passed, and there was now only one day left before the ancestral land opened. Meng Hao's eighth meridian... was now one hundred percent complete!

Eight Immortal meridians!

\*

1. In Renegade Immortal, Wang Lin stole the bloodline of the Ancient God. Or something along those lines, I haven't read it personally,

although I've heard it happens relatively early on in the story. He also had a similar mark on his forehead. Anyone with better information on this please send me a message so I can make this footnote better.

2. The scene with Wang Mu and the old man was in [chapter 806](#).
3. This is the same quote as from the official synopsis of the book, which I translated a long time ago and is still floating around out on the intrawebz. I tweaked this version a little bit to (hopefully) add a bit of the feeling that was lacking in my original translated version.

# Chapter 965: The Ancestral Land Opens!

Eight Immortal meridians caused intense power to surge through Meng Hao. Immortal qi flowed through him, and he exuded intense pressure. His eyes shone with Immortal light, like two burning lamps that ignited to life within the necropolis.

Everything now looked different to him, clearer. He could even magnify the tiniest speck of dust until he could see the entire structure that composed it.

“This feels... great,” he murmured. Eight Immortal meridians was his limit; there was no more Immortal qi in the area, making it difficult for him to make any further increases.

The mist dragon had completely vanished, having been completely absorbed by Meng Hao. The necropolis was now totally empty and quiet.

He slowly stood up, and cracking sounds could be heard as intense power surged through him.

“As soon as I leave the ancestral land, my Immortal Tribulation will appear!” His eyes shone brightly as he caused more power to explode out in a test to see exactly how much good fortune he had acquired.

Soon after, Meng Hao looked up and then glanced around. He saw that the mist in the pill furnace had already faded away; shockingly, there was now a Nirvana Fruit sitting there on the jade plate, glowing brightly!

It was as translucent as crystal, and incomparably beautiful.

A fragrant aroma began to spread out which contained a great Dao; apparently this Nirvana Fruit was now completely restored.

Meng Hao walked up to the pill furnace and looked at the Nirvana Fruit, eyes glittering. After a moment, his eyes shone with determination; he quickly reached out, picked up the fruit and held it in front of his face.

“Nirvana Fruit... the first generation Patriarch’s Nirvana Fruit.” He looked at the Nirvana Fruit and realized that, as of this moment, he had only two options.

"I've waited a long time, just for the sake of a Nirvana Fruit. Well, what is there to hesitate about?" He chuckled to himself silently. Finally, he turned toward the corpse of the first generation Patriarch, clasped hands, and bowed deeply. Then, without any further hesitation, he made up his mind. Now was not the time for further hesitation.

The fact that the Nirvana Fruit had been restored by fully absorbing the seven-colored liquid didn't bother Meng Hao at all. He hefted the fruit and pushed it hard onto his forehead.

Time to gamble!

Nirvana Fruits were not eaten like other fruits. They were absorbed directly into the body.

As soon as it touched Meng Hao's forehead, rumbling filled his body, and he felt like he was about to explode. It rapidly fused into his forehead, and disappeared without a trace. He suddenly began to tremble violently.

A massive power exploded out within him, filling his entire body and circulating through it in a continuous cycle. It rapidly found many sealed areas within Meng Hao's body, areas he didn't even know about, and burst them open!

Blood oozed out of his orifices, and he shook. Pores all over his body opened and expanded.

Intense pain wracked his four limbs, and yet, his eyes shone brightly.

He did not feel any sense of crisis, but rather, sensed that power surged through his body, making him more powerful than before!

His Dharma Idol appeared behind him, and then, shockingly, a second Dharma Idol appeared!

It looked different than Meng Hao's Dharma Idol, although it was similar. This second Dharma Idol... actually belonged to the first generation Patriarch!

An even more intense power surged through Meng Hao's body, and he began sweating profusely. However, his eyes shone brightly.

“So... this is what it feels like to use a Nirvana Fruit!

“I can form a second Dharma Idol, and my cultivation base can explode with even more power! And yet... in addition to the extra Dharma Idol, there is actually an even more important function.... It can exponentially increase the power of my Immortal meridians!

“Right now I have eight Immortal meridians. After absorbing the Nirvana Fruit, I can wield power equal to 16 Immortal meridians!

“That is the true purpose of the Nirvana Fruit!” Veins popped out on Meng Hao’s forehead. He currently only had eight Immortal meridians, but the power he was able to wield was twice as much!

“The reason Fang Wei didn’t utilize that power before is most likely because it’s only possible to do so after you reach the Immortal Realm!

“If I open 100 Immortal meridians, and also have this Nirvana Fruit, then I’ll be able to unleash the power of 200 Immortal meridians!

“The other sects and clans presumably have similar secret magics. However, considering how rare Nirvana Fruits are, it’s logical to come to the conclusion that those other secret magics do not measure up!

“Otherwise the Fang Clan wouldn’t have been able to maintain their position as one of the Four Great Clans, especially during times when Nirvana Fruits did not appear!”

Meng Hao trembled as his power only continued to increase. However, he could also sense that he wouldn’t be able to stay in this state of fusion for very long. He struggled to lift his head and then extend his right hand out toward the sphere of light that orbited around the body of the first generation Patriarch.

This time, all he had to do was grab at it, and the sphere began to tremble. A thrumming sound could be heard, and massive amounts of light exploded out in all directions. After a moment of what almost seemed to be hesitation, it suddenly transformed into a streak of light that shot toward Meng Hao, transforming into a starstone which came to rest on Meng Hao’s palm.

It sat there, flickering with starlight, beautiful to the extreme.

Meng Hao looked at the starstone for a moment, then closed his hand over it and clenched hard.

In that instant, ripples began to emanate from the starstone, which poured into Meng Hao's mind and rapidly transformed into an incantation mnemonic composed of multiple verses.

That incantation mnemonic was none other than... the One Thought Stellar Transformation!

"No wonder nobody was ever able to acquire One Thought Stellar Transformation! It's connected to this necropolis, and most importantly... only one person at a time can gain enlightenment of it! Once the legacy is passed on, nobody else can learn it unless that first person dies!"

"That's because One Thought Stellar Transformation is both a Daoist magic... and also NOT a Daoist magic!"

"It's a magical item... and NOT a magical item!"

"It's a type of magical item which, after being fused with, can temporarily erupt with... a will of invincibility!" Having gained enlightenment, he squeezed down on the starstone again, causing it to melt into a black liquid that covered his hand. It then rapidly spread out to cover his entire body, then bored into him. Moments later, shockingly, speckles of starlight appeared in his left eye!

The speckles of starlight were strange, and as they flickered, it almost seemed as if his left eye had become a starry sky. Frightening ripples appeared as he looked out, and anyone who met his gaze would surely be terrified.

After absorbing the starstone, Meng Hao's body trembled again, and his eyes widened. More veins popped out on his forehead, and he looked like he was on the verge of exploding. Rumbling sounds emanated out from within him, and gradually, the Nirvana Fruit that he had absorbed started to become visible on his forehead, as if it couldn't stay inside of him for much longer.

It was in that moment, though, that Meng Hao could clearly sense that the Nirvana Fruit was emanating traces of a Dao.

That type of Dao seemed to contain a boundless starry sky, and innumerable magical techniques and divine abilities. In fact, there were even thoughts that did not belong to Meng Hao himself. As if... they were the memories of someone else, the remnants of someone who had existed in the past!

Ancientness. Remote antiquity.

Images appeared in Meng Hao's mind of a middle-aged man, his long, white hair whipping around him. Four Nirvana Fruits circled around him, each one emanating an aura that left Meng Hao terrified and undergoing constant transformations. Any one of them was powerful enough to split apart Heaven and Earth, to cause heavenly bodies to collapse.

This man was none other than the first generation Patriarch!

His eyes were filled with a gleam of obsession. He was surrounded by starlight, and was currently forging his way ahead toward an unsurpassable elevation.

Meng Hao wanted to see more, but couldn't hold on any longer. His face was ashen as the Nirvana Fruit flew out of his forehead of its own volition. As it landed on the palm of his hand, blood oozed out of his mouth, and he sat down cross-legged to meditate. After a moment of recuperation, his eyes opened, and he was fully recovered and at his peak.

He took a deep breath, calmed his mind and heart, and then began to calculate time.

"Thirty breaths!

"Considering that the first generation Patriarch's Nirvana Fruit doesn't belong to me, and also considering the level of my cultivation base, I can only fuse with it for thirty breaths of time! If they were my own Nirvana Fruits, then I could fuse with them... for all eternity!" Meng Hao's eyes gleamed with a strange light.

"I wonder what place the first generation Patriarch was going to in that

vision. I must have been experiencing a memory. A memory that exists inside the Nirvana Fruit.

"Perhaps... there are even further uses for Nirvana Fruits!" When he thought back to the vision, he remembered that the first generation Patriarch was surrounded by four Nirvana Fruits, and that each one of them had emanated an aura that caused even the Heavens to tremble.

"Fang Wei...." After a moment of thought, Meng Hao looked up, and his eyes flashed with viciousness. Finally, he turned and bowed deeply to the first generation Patriarch, then waved his right hand, causing the main door of the necropolis to swing open, after which he strode out.

"It's time to get out of here!"

Back outside in the Misty Heaven Vault, Meng Hao yet again produced the bronze lamp. Immediately, the surrounding mists began to vibrate, and then recede. Once again, a path opened up in front of him.

He proceeded along with much greater speed than he had upon entering, and it only took a few hours before he flew out from the Misty Heaven Vault. As he did, he saw no trace of Fang Daohong or Fang Linhe.

He could also sense that a huge vortex had appeared in a remote area of the ancestral land.

"The way out has opened!" he thought. He looked off into the distance, unsure of exactly how long the exit had been open. Obviously, Fang Daohong and all the others had already left.

Only the terracotta soldier remained waiting for Meng Hao. As soon as he emerged, its eyes glittered with a brilliant glow. Meng Hao looked back at it, his gaze filled with a reluctance to part.

Earlier, he had picked up on various clues that had led him to a certain conclusion. Now, with his increased cultivation base, he was able to see things even more clearly.

During the vast time in which the terracotta soldier had been waiting for Meng Hao, it had undergone certain transformations. It had been assimilated into this ancestral land, and would therefore be able to exist

here eternally, at the peak of its power.

However, if it emerged into the outside world for too long without returning, then it would begin to decay, and would age by tens of thousands of years in a relatively short period of time.

"The only way for me to take it away would be if I had a piece of the Ruins of Immortality. If I did, I could take it with me long term." Meng Hao flew up to sit on the terracotta soldier, after which it yet again changed shape to its enormous form, them employed its top speed to head off toward the exit.

The closer it got to the exit, the stronger the signs of dissipation got. Meng Hao sighed, and, after confirming what was happening, and despite his unwillingness to part with it, he decided that he couldn't just watch it suffer harm.

He decided to leave it next to the crumbled mountains where he had found it. His voice soft, he said, "Go ahead and change back into a statue. I promise you that one day, I'll come back here to take you away. It's too bad that once the ancestral land closes, our connection will break."

As soon as the words left his mouth, the statue's eyes glittered. It suddenly hefted its greatsword and then swung it through the air, causing a huge rift to open up, almost completely slashing the entire sky open.

Meng Hao's eyes sparkled.

"You can slash your way out of here any time you want, huh?" Meng Hao asked. "In other words, you can go anywhere you feel like, right?"

The terracotta soldier nodded, but then shook its head. Finally, it gave Meng Hao a deep look, and for the first time, spoke, in a muffled, hoarse voice.

"Fang Clan... ancestral land... five hundred kilometers... I protect you."

As soon as Meng Hao heard the voice, his heart seized. It was a voice he would never forget: Ke Yunhai's voice.

"Foster father...." In that moment, Meng Hao realized that Ke Yunhai

didn't just use some of his life force from the dragon lamp with the phoenix wick to create the terracotta soldier. He had also used a strand of his soul.

After a very long moment, Meng Hao looked at the terracotta soldier one last time, then turned and headed toward the exit. After packing away the memories deep into his heart, his entire person began to radiate a harsh, murderous aura. He was like an unsheathed sword, shining coldly!

"Fang Wei, it's time to finish things between the two of us!"

# Chapter 966: Storm Winds Gather!

The main hall in the Fang Clan's ancestral mansion on Planet East Victory was packed tightly with members of the Fang Clan. Virtually all areas of the ancestral mansion were occupied, and there were even some who could not squeeze in and were left outside.

All of the alchemists in the Dao of Alchemy Division, and all of the apprentice alchemists, were all staring intently.

In addition to the Fang Clan, other powerful factions and cultivators on Planet East Victory had learned of Meng Hao and were now waiting.

In fact, in virtually all of the various sects and clans in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, people were looking on, waiting to find out exactly what kind of person could so capture the attention and estimation of all the famous, newly ascended true Immortals.

Meng Hao hadn't even emerged yet, but his fame had already spread throughout all of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

People watched closely as Fang Wei sat cross-legged outside the main temple. Finally, he slowly raised his head, and his eyes gleamed with incredible coldness as he looked at the temple hall.

It was at this point that the Grand Elder, after a long moment of silence, resolutely waved his right hand. Rumbling sounds could be heard as a huge vortex appeared.

The vortex spun and then rose higher, rising up out of the main temple hall, high up into the air to where everyone could see it.

"The ancestral land is opening! Fang Hao is going to come out!"

"What's the point of him even coming out? Prince Wei wants him dead, so he'll die for sure!"

"It's too bad. His bloodline is stronger than Fang Wei's, and their latent talent is about the same, but in terms of reaching true Immortality, he was just a bit too slow.... Once you fall behind even one bit, you'll be left behind at every step. And that's not even to mention advancing from true

Immortality into the Ancient Realm in the future."

The crowds were abuzz, and Fang Xi stood among them, fists clenched, expression anxious as he panted. However, he continued to have faith that Meng Hao would pull off a miracle!

"Fang Hao, Coz, you have to win!"

Fang Wei's expression was calm, but his eyes flickered with killing intent, and his desire to do battle grew stronger. Everyone could see as his gaze shifted over to the vortex like a drawn dagger.

He had waited for this day for a long time, and it was finally here. He was going to make sure that the whole Fang Clan, and all of the sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, knew that Fang Wei was the Chosen of this generation! He, Fang Wei, was the future pillar of the Fang Clan!

The humiliation he had endured during the rise of the East Ascension Sun would now be thoroughly avenged!

"Fang Hao, you are merely a stepping stone beneath my feet. Your only function is for me to step upon you as I climb to the top!" His expression was one of arrogance, and his heart filled with coldness. His killing intent grew only more intense, and he looked like a sharp, glinting sword!

At this point, time seemed to have frozen, and the entire world grew silent. Innumerable gazes were fixed upon the exit to the ancestral land!

As the vortex up in midair slowly rotated, it suddenly began to gleam with brilliant light like a sparkling body of water, and a figure appeared in the shimmering depths.

As soon as the figure appeared, countless eyes went wide, and people began to hold their breaths. Fang Wei's killing intent reached a pinnacle, causing rumbling to fill the sky. It almost seemed as if the temperature had instantly dropped!

Soon everyone began to gape. The person they were all looking at, the person emerging from the vortex... was an old man with long gray hair. He walked out excitedly, as if he had just emerged unscathed from a deadly crisis. He was trembling, as if he had experienced untold terrors in the

ancestral land. He looked as though he had been holding innumerable anxieties within him, but was now able to relax. At the same time, he seemed slightly uneasy, as if he held a gloomy outlook on his own future.

“That’s not Fang Hao, that’s....”

“That’s Elder Fang Shuiyun!”

“Why is he walking out of the ancestral land!?”

The Fang Clan members gaped in shock.

When Fang Xiushan saw the old man, he stared in shock. Then his face flickered slightly. The Grand Elder’s brow suddenly furrowed.

After the old man appeared, he looked around at the crowds of clan members, and gaped. Then he saw Fang Wei sitting there cross-legged, and instantly sensed his true Immortality.

“He... reached true Immortal Ascension. Ah, Fang Xiushan... now I understand!” The old man’s eyes were bloodshot as he glared fiercely at Fang Xiushan.

“Fang Xiushan,” he barked, “things aren’t finished between us! I won’t rest until one of us is dead!” His words caused a collective gasp to rise up from the crowds. Nobody could figure out exactly what Elder Fang Shuiyun was talking about.

However, before any of them could begin to discuss the matter, the vortex behind the old man rippled, and other figures emerged. Three people walked out amidst glittering light.

None of them were Meng Hao!

The appearance of these three men resulted in further astonishment on the part of the surrounding clan members. They were also clan Elders! Everyone was bewildered, and thoughtful looks began to appear in their eyes as they began to speculate why all of these Elders would emerge from the ancestral land. Everyone had assumed that it would be Meng Hao who came out.

As soon as the three men emerged, they looked at Fang Wei, now clearly

in the Immortal Realm, and then turned angrily toward Fang Xiushan. Voices icy, they spoke wrathfully, in much the same manner as the first old man, as if their resentment was now carved into their hearts, and even into their bones.

“Fang Xiushan! You deserve to die a horrible death!”

“You had better give us a good explanation, Fang Xiushan, otherwise you’re finished!”

“Fang Xiushan, how could you con us in this way!? I will never forget this enmity!”

It wasn’t that they couldn’t hold their tongues. However, everything that had happened with Meng Hao had left them completely shaken. Based on their cultivation bases and levels of wisdom, it was obvious to them that that if they made too much of this matter, the result would be unfavorable to them.

And yet... after the ancestral land had reopened, they had planned to use a special method prepared for them by Fang Xiushan to secretly make their escape. That method was not one that utilized the main exit. Imagine their rage when they found out that Fang Xiushan’s special method... didn’t work at all!

They immediately realized that Fang Xiushan had planned for them to die all along. Whether or not they succeeded in killing Meng Hao, when they emerged from the vortex, their punishment for entering the ancestral land without authorization should be death.

In their minds, Fang Xiushan had certainly thought of some way to escape responsibility. At first, none of them were sure exactly how he planned to do it. However, after bracing themselves and emerging through the exit, they sensed that Fang Wei had reached the Immortal Realm, and then everything became clear.

Because of Fang Wei becoming a true Immortal, Fang Xiushan, being his father, would definitely be able to extricate himself from any punishment.

Therefore, all of them spontaneously decided to wholeheartedly

denounce Fang Xiushan!

This was why all of them emerged from the vortex, looked at Fang Wei, then turned and spoke wrathful words to Fang Xiushan.

Fang Xiushan's face flickered yet again. He had personally requested assistance from all of these men in his efforts to kill Meng Hao. According to his original plan, when the ancestral land reopened, they should have been able to use his special method to successfully leave without going through the exit.

However, things had progressed beyond his control. Then these newly emerged Elders suddenly said what they did. Fang Xiushan's face darkened, and his eyes narrowed coldly.

It was at this point that the Grand Elder flicked his sleeve.

"Enough. The clan will handle this matter later. Stand down, all of you!" The Elders who had just emerged from the vortex looked hatefully over at Fang Xiushan. However, fearful of the Grand Elder, all of them backed down.

In the same moment that the four of them stepped back, the vortex glittered once again, and all eyes once again swiveled over. Fang Wei also frowned and looked over.

However... as the vortex swirled, two figures emerged. Yet again, neither of them were Meng Hao. Instead, they were Fang Daohong and Fang Linhe. Originally, they had planned to wait for Meng Hao inside of the ancestral land. However, once the exit opened, and before either of them could react, a powerful wind had sprung up and swept them out of the Misty Heaven Vault. When they emerged, they found themselves directly in front of the exit.

As soon as they emerged, all eyes were fixed upon them.

"I can't believe it's not Fang Hao!"

"Interesting. There were actually six clan Elders in the ancestral land. How did they get in? And... what exactly was their purpose inside?!"

“Fang Hao was also in the ancestral land. Could it be... that these elders were there to harm him in some way?”

Of course, many of the clan members were intelligent people, and it didn’t take long for them to analyze the situation and come to an approximately correct conclusion.

That was especially true of the members of the direct bloodline, who were furious. Many of their Elders stepped forward, including Meng Hao’s 19th Uncle. All of them were enraged, and a rare killing intent toward their own clan members could be seen in their eyes.

Fang Xiushan smiled coldly, as if he didn’t care about what was happening at all. If Fang Wei hadn’t become a true Immortal, then all of these things would result in a heavy punishment for him. However, considering things had turned out the way they had, it was a different matter.

“Considering I’m being protected by the Sixth Patriarch, what can a single, piddling Fang Hao possibly count for!?” thought Fang Xiushan, calming his heart. Standing next to him was Fang Wei’s grandfather, who frowned slightly but said nothing.

Fang Daohong and Fang Linhe scanned the crowd silently. They did not berate Fang Xiushan, but rather, sat down cross-legged just outside the vortex, completely ignoring everyone.

This scene filled quite a few hearts with shock. The Grand Elder’s eyes widened; even he felt as if something strange was going on.

Time passed, enough for an incense stick to burn.

Suddenly, the vortex spun once again. This time, it was completely different from the previous times. Rumbling like thunder could be heard as a tall, slender figure slowly began to step out.

Before he could completely emerge, the sky above Planet East Victory filled with tempestuous lightning. Roaring sounds echoed out, as clouds piled on top of each other. Massive Tribulation Clouds had appeared in the blink of an eye.

These Tribulation Clouds were shocking to the extreme. Anyone who looked at them couldn't help but stare wide-eyed with disbelief and shock. The reason was that these Tribulation Clouds were simply gargantuan!

They covered all of Planet East Victory!

From out in the starry sky, it looked as if Planet East Victory had turned into one giant mass of clouds. All of the Ninth Mountain and Sea was shaken as... the area covered by the Tribulation Clouds... continued to grow!

Fan Dong'er. Fang Wei. All of the other Chosen who had just stepped into true Immortality had never provoked Heaven-shattering, Earth-shaking Tribulation Clouds like this!

Compared to these Tribulation Clouds, the Tribulation Clouds they had faced were like childrens' toys!

"W-w-what kind of Tribulation is that!?!?"

That was the question running through the trembling minds of all the observing cultivators.

# Chapter 967: Paragon Immortal Tribulation

As of this moment, the cultivators of Planet East Victory were shocked, the members of the Fang Clan were shocked, and all the cultivators from the various sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea who were watching, were... completely shocked!

Their eyes were wide and their minds reeled as they saw the Tribulation Clouds cover Planet East Victory, and then spread out continuously.

“What... what kind of Tribulation is that?”

“How could there be a kind of Immortal Tribulation like this!?”

“Those definitely can’t be Tribulation Clouds! Could it be that there’s some sort of unpredictable, Heaven-shaking disaster brewing?”

“A Tribulation like this is simply impossible!”

Planet East Victory was in an uproar, as was the entirety of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. As of this moment, all eyes were filled with complete shock and disbelief.

That was especially true of the Chosen of the various sects and clans, who were completely tongue tied, and whose minds were filled with unprecedented roaring.

Fang Wei was completely taken aback. He stared at the Tribulation Clouds up in the Heavens, and his body began to tremble. His face fell, and he could think of only one thing to say to himself.

“Impossible!”

In the same moment in the Nine Seas God World, Fan Dong'er stood in front of an enormous crystal, upon which she could see an image of the scene playing out on Planet East Victory. Her face was pale white, and her eyes filled with disbelief as she stared at the Tribulation Clouds on the crystal.

Actually, she didn’t even need to look at the crystal. With her divine

sense, she could feel the incredible fluctuations rolling out over the Ninth Sea due to the incredible events occurring on Planet East Victory.

"Is it him...?" she thought. "Although, even if he is in the middle of true Immortal Ascension, he couldn't possibly cause Tribulation Clouds like that to form. I've never even heard of anything like that. Just... how thoroughly did he prepare to burst out in such a fashion!?"

Zhao Yifan was in the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto, staring blankly up into the sky, his mind reeling. His recently mended Dao heart, which had been filled with confidence because of his recent rise to prominence, was now... beginning to crumble.

"How could this be happening...?" he murmured, trembling. "His true Immortality is... different from mine?"

At the same time, Wang Tengfei was in the Wang Clan, his hands clenched tightly into fists, veins bulging on his forehead. It was impossible for him to remain calm! "Just what is his true Immortality...?"

Regarding Song Luodan, Wang Mu, Taiyang Zi, Sun Hai, and all the newly ascended true Immortals, as of this moment, their minds and hearts were all filled with roaring.

Li Ling'er looked up into the Heavens. She had a complicated relationship with Meng Hao, and as of this moment, her mind was in chaos. She had expected that Meng Hao would reach true Immortal Ascension. However, she simply couldn't wrap her mind around the fact that Meng Hao's Tribulation Clouds were so incredibly unbelievable.

Chu Yuyan and Pill Demon could also sense the massive transformations in the energies of Heaven and Earth. On Planet South Heaven, Meng Hao's parents were also watching.

As of this moment, all eyes were focused on Planet East Victory.

The members of the Fang Clan looked at the figure emerging from within the vortex of the ancestral Land in disbelief.

"Is it because of him...?" The hearts of each and every member of the Fang Clan were filled with incredible shock.

Fang Xiushan gaped, and Fang Wei's grandfather gasped. As for the Grand Elder, his mind was reeling, and he stared in shock.

It was at this point that Meng Hao slowly stepped out of the vortex. In the moment that his right foot emerged, Heaven and Earth rumbled so intensely that it seemed as if the air itself would split. Power seemingly capable of destroying all life surged out.

It was as if some sort of Immortal God were concealed within the clouds, looking down at the lands, roaring amongst the starry sky. As the roaring echoed out, the clouds suddenly turned red, as red as fire. Instantly, everything up above was crimson.

It was the same out in the starry sky.

It was as if the clouds themselves were bearing witness to the emergence of Meng Hao, to the appearance of an unheard-of Immortal in the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

By now, the Patriarchs of the various sects and clans were waking up, emerging from secluded meditation. Even the Patriarchs of the Three Great Daoist Societies responded to the shocking events playing out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

In the Fang Clan ancestral mansion, all of the Patriarchs, including the recently returned Seventh Patriarch, were all shocked. That was even true of the one the Seventh Patriarch had referred to as Eldest Brother.

If you traced the Earth Patriarch's bloodline back, he was actually descended from the same almighty Dao Realm expert as Meng Hao.

"He has made profound preparations," he murmured in confusion, "leading to this explosive eruption of Immortal Tribulation. But, how come I'm unable to see the true depths of the kid's Tribulation...? Just how terrifyingly well-prepared is he?!"

"This is unprecedented! In all the ancient records I've read, I've never seen any mention of Tribulation Clouds like this when someone steps into true Immortality!"

The Patriarchs of the other sects and clans all looked into the starry sky

in the direction of Planet East Victory, and various thoughts went through their heads.

Standing next to Fan Dong'er in the Nine Seas God World was her master, the old woman who was in the Dao Realm. Currently, she was frowning.

“What profound preparations for someone who’s only in the Spirit Realm!” she thought. “Only a cultivation base with 90 or more meridians should provoke Tribulation Clouds like this. But... something strange seems to be going on. Why do those Tribulation Clouds seem to be simply too large!?”

In fact, the Patriarchs of all the various sects and clans were frowning and reaching similar conclusions as the old woman.

“There’s something strange about those Tribulation Clouds!”

“Even if this guy was more of a blazing sun than he already is, and even if he was more profoundly well prepared, it’s highly unlikely that Tribulation Clouds like that would appear! They almost don’t look like Tribulation Clouds, but rather, a strange sign!”

“Perhaps he’s using some type of secret magic?”

Gradually, the Patriarchs were able to pick up on clues that caused them to begin to make various speculations. As they stared in the direction of Planet East Victory, Meng Hao fully emerged from within the vortex.

In that instant, shocking thunder crackled, and the Tribulation Clouds churned. Countless red bolts of lightning danced about in the clouds, emanating a terrifying aura.

At the same time, the Tribulation Clouds continued to expand out into the starry sky. They sped out like a charging army, rumbling, growing larger and larger. From a distance, it looked like some bizarre Demonic sign.

Everything shook violently!

Even the Ji Clan of the Ninth Mountain and Sea was shaken. An ancient

gaze pierced out from the Ninth Mountain, which then came to rest on Planet East Victory.

The gaze was filled with intense pressure as it focused on Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's expression was calm. He stood there, tall, robes whipping about, long hair dancing in the wind. His eyes were filled with a profound gleam that seemed to contain a boundless starry sky. His left eye sparkled with starlight that seemed capable of sucking away one's soul.

As he stood there outside of the vortex, his aura seemed normal. However, the Heavens above him were bright red. And then, there were the churning, roaring Tribulation Clouds. All of it made Meng Hao seem to be like some sort of Immortal God!

Upon cursory examination, Fang Wei's energy couldn't even possibly compare.

Meng Hao's aura said... that he would become an Immortal whether the Heavens agreed or not! It was a domineering power that said, "If you approve, fine. Don't approve? TOO BAD!"

All of the members of the Fang Clan were watching Meng Hao. They looked at the terrifying Tribulation Clouds up in the Heavens, and inhaled deeply.

"Fang Hao..."

"He provoked energy and Tribulation Clouds like that, all in the instant he stepped out of the ancestral land! Fang Hao... is going to step into true Immortality!"

"Prince Wei's true Immortal Tribulation earlier doesn't seem to measure up. Prince Hao.... Is definitely going to astonish us!"

The members of the direct bloodline were extremely excited. Fang Xi stood there, hands clenched into fists, filled with anticipation as he looked at Meng Hao.

"Fang Hao, Coz, you definitely have to succeed!"

Fang Wei began to tremble slightly, shaken by Meng Hao's energy, and

the terrifying Tribulation Clouds up in the Heavens. He could hardly breathe.

Veins popped out on his forehead as he shot to his feet.

“Fang Hao!!” he roared.

“Do you dare to fight with me!?” His voice echoed like peals of thunder, and his eyes radiated intense killing intent. His energy surged up, as power from his 98 Immortal meridians exploded out. His Dharma Idol appeared behind him, seemingly powerful enough to support all the lands.

Meng Hao’s expression was the same as usual as he looked at Fang Wei

“Just let me push open the Door of Immortality,” he said coolly. “After that, there won’t be any need for you to fight me. I’ll just take back what belongs to me.” Then he turned to look back at the Tribulation Clouds up in the Heavens, and his eyes brimmed with the desire to fight.

The moment he had been waiting so long for, was finally here!

It was now time to step into true Immortality!

Meng Hao suddenly shot up into the air, flying up into the Heavens as everyone watched.

“Immortal Tribulation! Why haven’t you made your move yet!?” Meng Hao’s expression was as calm as ever, but his desire to do battle grew even stronger. His voice echoed out in all directions, piercing the Tribulation Clouds, causing a huge indentation to appear in the layers of clouds. The power of his voice smashed into the clouds, hewing out a huge hole.

What appeared next was... A Door of Immortality with a breathtaking aura, descending from the starry sky.

This Door of Immortality was enormous, so large that Planet East Victory seemed like a toddler in front of it. Boundless Immortal light surged out, and countless magical symbols glittered on its face. The clouds scattered as the enormous door came to rest in front of Planet East Victory.

This Door of Immortality was larger than any other Door of Immortality

which had appeared during a true Immortal Ascension!

When Fang Wei saw the Door of Immortality, his face went pale. The Door of Immortality that he had faced wasn't even ten percent as large as this door!

Furthermore, when the Door of Immortality appeared, numerous gigantic palaces flew out from the clouds. They looked like heavenly palaces, and stretched out seemingly without limit. It wasn't just the people on Planet East Victory who could see them. Everyone on the other three planets were also able to use various methods to observe.

The boundless palaces, each one incredibly huge, emanated Immortal might throughout the Ninth Mountain and Sea. The Ninth Mountain trembled and the Ninth Sea raged. All of the cultivators of the various sects and clans, even the Patriarchs, were thoroughly shocked.

In the Nine Seas God World, the old woman standing next to Fan Dong'er took a deep breath as she finally understood.

"That Door of Immortality... Those Immortal Palaces.... I understand!" she thought. "He's not using an Immortality Illumination Vine, he's... reaching Immortal Ascension on his own! This kid has incredible willpower! What determination! What destiny!!"

She wasn't the only one who understood what was happening. The other Patriarchs of the various sects and clans all reached the same enlightenment, and were completely shaken.

"If the Heavens approve, well and good. If they don't want to, they'll still be forced to acknowledge an Immortal who verifies their own Dao and reaches Immortal Ascension on their own. No wonder the Tribulation Clouds are so huge!"

"From ancient times until now in the Nine Mountains and Seas, people who verify their own Dao in such a way are incredibly rare. Only Kṣitigarbha, Lord of the Fourth Mountain and Sea, ever verified his Dao on his own, and eternally suppressed the underworld!"

In that very moment, far out in the starry sky of the Ninth Mountain and

Sea, a woman in a white robe sat in an Immortal's cave somewhere in the Ruins of Immortality. This was the same woman who had appointed Meng Hao as 13th in the Echelon. Her eyes suddenly opened, and she looked off into the distance.

"Paragon Immortal...." she murmured. A rarely seen light suddenly flickered in her eyes.

# Chapter 968: Transcending Tribulation!

The Heavens rumbled as the red Tribulation Clouds surged, as if there were a mighty army marching within them. Booms could be heard that shook the land, filling all of Planet East Victory.

The area encompassed by the Tribulation Clouds expanded out past Planet East Victory into the starry sky. They were matchlessly large, and the minds of the cultivators from the sects and clans were filled with something like the crashing of lightning as they watched.

As for the Immortal Palaces in the clouds, they were beautiful and ornately decorated, and emanated shocking Immortal might that roiled out into the stars. Furthermore, it looked as if there were countless Immortals floating about within the Immortal Palaces.

Although they were illusory, it was the first time from ancient times until now that Immortal Palaces like this had appeared in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Even in the Nine Mountains and Seas in general, an Immortal Tribulation with Immortal Palaces like this was the stuff of legend only.

In addition, the Door of Immortality was completely shocking. It hovered there outside of Planet East Victory, enormous and ancient, with a primordial aura that seemed to represent the will of the Nine Mountains and Seas themselves.

This Immortal Tribulation, this Door of Immortality, and these Immortal Palaces were unlike anything else!

That was because Meng Hao was about to become a true Immortal among true Immortals!

Everyone on Planet East Victory watched as Meng Hao shot up into the sky like a meteor. Almost the instant he flew up, the Tribulation Clouds up above seethed with uncountable bolts of red lightning. It was like a massive web that dropped down from the clouds, which then condensed together into one gigantic red lightning bolt that seemed capable of ripping apart Heaven and Earth. The lightning bolt then shot directly

toward Meng Hao.

This was Immortal Tribulation!

Anyone who looked at a Tribulation like this would feel their face fall, even Fang Wei and the true Immortal Chosen of the various sects and clans. As for everyone else, they all gasped. When compared to the tribulation faced earlier by the true Immortal Chosen, it was virtually impossible to describe how much more powerful this tribulation was.

In the stony cavern deep beneath the Fang Clan's ancestral mansion, the Earth Patriarch sat with the other six Patriarchs and looked at the red lightning.

"Experiencing true Immortal destiny is like being selected by Heaven and Earth," he said. "It seems difficult to become a true Immortal in that way, but actually, the will of the Nine Mountains and Seas always leaves a small chance of success. People who achieve true Immortal Ascension like this then have some of the destiny of the Nine Mountains and Seas in them!"

"Using the Immortality Illumination Vine is essentially cheating, and involves no true Immortal destiny. Because of that, the Immortal Tribulation is actually more powerful. However, successfully opening the Door of Immortality results in the same approval of the will of the Nine Mountains and Seas.

"However... reaching true Immortal Ascension on one's own is the most domineering of the three paths. It shows contempt for the Heavens, and derision of the will of the Nine Mountains and Seas. It is to be... an Immortal, in and of oneself, and a true Immortal at that. And that is why, whether the Heavens approve of him or not... they will be forced to acknowledge him!"

"The Heavens are forced to acquiesce, and as such, this third type of true Immortal Tribulation offers no way out!"

The Patriarchs of the various sects and clans were all paying close attention to the goings on. Normally speaking, a Spirit Realm cultivator stepping into Immortality was not something they would deign to observe,

unless it happened to be a Chosen from their own organization. The Immortal Tribulation of members of other sects or clans was not something that the Patriarchs would care about in the least.

But Meng Hao was different!

He was walking the third of the three paths, a path that stirred even the Patriarchs. They wanted to see... if he would actually be able to succeed!

What was happening now was something that they might have a chance to see only once in a lifetime.

Heaven and Earth rumbled, and red lightning shot down toward Meng Hao with indescribable speed. He hovered there in midair, his expression the same as usual, his eyes filled with the desire to do battle.

"The moment I have been waiting so long for is finally here!" Meng Hao lifted his right hand, causing ripples to spread out from his true Immortal fleshly body. His Immortal meridians rotated, and his willpower solidified as he clenched his hand into a fist.

He punched out at the red lightning, and a massive boom filled the air. The lightning instantly began to collapse. However, it only collapsed by about seventy percent, and the remaining thirty percent smashed into Meng Hao.

However, Meng Hao simply hovered there in midair, allowing the lightning to strike him. Innumerable sparks flew out, and his hair swirled around him as he threw his head back and laughed.

"Is true Immortal Tribulation really this weak?!" Meng Hao actually felt a bit disappointed. It was back when he had witnessed the Immortal Tribulation of his master Pill Demon back on Planet South Heaven, that... he began to look forward to transcending his own tribulation.

As he laughed, the Heavens rumbled and the clouds churned. Countless lightning bolts once again began to form, rapidly transforming into another, even more shocking lightning attack that shot toward him.

As it neared, Meng Hao once again laughed uproariously. The sound was so intense that it could pierce metal and crush rock. Everyone who heard

it was shocked inwardly. Suddenly, Meng Hao transformed into a golden roc that flapped its wings and shot toward the lightning.

This did not seem like transcending the tribulation, this seemed like a baptism within the tribulation!

BOOOOMMMMM!

The lightning descended, crackling around Meng Hao in golden roc form. It was like a giant globe of lightning, casting scintillating light throughout Heaven and Earth.

“Bring it on!” Meng Hao’s voice echoed out, and the golden roc shrieked as he shot toward the clouds up in the sky. Lightning crashed, a third bolt, a fourth, a fifth....

Terrifying lightning descended like rain, accompanied by shocking rumbling sounds. Meng Hao in golden roc form sped upward as fast as ever, smacking through the lightning like a sharp knife through a piece of bamboo. The lightning was like dried twigs that he easily crushed as he charged directly into the Tribulation Clouds.

Planet East Victory was filled with a sound that resembled the heartbeat of a giant. The land quaked, the planet trembled, and all the cultivators on the planet were completely shaken.

The Tribulation Clouds began to part, showing a tiny hole that Meng Hao had not quite pierced through yet. However, behind it, the Door of Immortality was clearly visible.

Unfortunately, between him and the Door of Immortality were the Immortal Palaces!

This was Meng Hao’s true Immortal Tribulation. Not only were the Tribulation Clouds vastly larger than anyone else’s, behind those Tribulation Clouds were the Immortal Palaces. If he wanted to get to the Door of Immortality, he would have to get through all those Immortal Palaces first!

Meng Hao reverted from his golden roc form, coughing up a mouthful of blood as he was shoved backward several paces. His eyes then began to

shine brightly with the desire to fight.

Most of his clothing was shredded away, leaving him completely bare chested. His hair whipped about, and not a single injury could be seen on him. In the moment that he coughed up the mouthful of blood, his Eternal stratum kicked into work, repairing him instantly.

When Fang Wei saw all of this, his face grew unsightly, and his eyes flickered with killing intent. After a moment, he took a deep breath, and the killing intent grew even more intense.

Off to the side, Fang Xiushan was astonished. His hands were clenched into fists, and inwardly, he was cursing Meng Hao. What he hoped for most was that Meng Hao would perish during his Immortal Tribulation. Then, all of the problems would be resolved.

“Die, you little son of a bitch,” he growled inwardly. “Die in the Immortal Tribulation! That’s your fate!”

The Grand Elder’s eyes shone with a strange light as he stared at Meng Hao up in the sky. Then he began to pant. In the end, it was impossible to guess what he might be thinking.

The members of the direct bloodline were incredibly excited, and even the other ordinary clan members were getting worked up.

As Meng Hao fell back down a bit, the hole in the Tribulation Clouds began to close up, as if it had never existed in the first place. At the same time, an unprecedented pressure radiated out, and more lightning began to gather.

There were no chances, and no lucky breaks!

This was why it was so challenging to reach true Immortal Ascension on one’s own!

The Patriarchs of the various sects and clans all looked on with curious eyes.

In the Nine Seas God World, Fan Dong’er breathed heavily as she looked at the crystal in front of her. She could see the image of Meng Hao

slamming into the Tribulation Lightning, and the sight of the vast Tribulation Clouds caused her mind to go blank with shock.

"Master, will... will he transcend the tribulation?" she asked softly.

"Your master has never seen Immortal Tribulation like this before," the old woman replied slowly. "I've only heard about it in stories. There are no opportunities for survival in this type of tribulation. Of course, since it's Immortal Tribulation, the lightning won't exceed the limits of the Immortal Realm by too much. However, I've heard that the lightning will never end. Furthermore, those Immortal Palaces blocking the way will be very difficult to get past."

Words similar to this were being spoken in all of the other various sects and clans.

"Is this supposed to be difficult...?" thought Meng Hao, his desire to do battle swirling to new heights. He let out a roar as his Dharma Idol appeared behind him. It was only a single Dharma Idol, but it was fully 21,000 meters tall.

The moment the Dharma Idol appeared, Meng Hao flashed up toward the Tribulation Clouds. Rumbling filled Heaven and Earth as numerous lightning bolts struck down. In the blink of an eye, more than ten bolts were about to crash into him.

Crashing sounds could be heard as the lightning bolts slammed into him. At the same time, Meng Hao lifted his right hand, within which appeared a long spear. Its haft was made from the World Tree, and the spearhead was crafted from white bone. Hefting the spear, he charged up into the sky.

Everything shook as the lightning collapsed into pieces, completely destroyed. As he neared the clouds, Meng Hao roared, and his Dharma Idol reached out with both hands to grab ahold of them. Veins popped out on Meng Hao's forehead.

RUMBLE!

Meng Hao's Dharma Idol appeared to be ripping the Heavens apart. It

grabbed the Tribulation Clouds and wrenched them to either side. The lands quaked, and massive rumbling filled the air. The stars shook as a huge rift was torn directly in the middle of the Tribulation Clouds.

It was as if a huge sword had simply sundered them in two. Now, the palaces behind the Tribulation Clouds were clearly visible. Immediately, Immortal light began to shine out, and the Immortals in their palaces stopped in their tracks and turned to look at Meng Hao.

It was at this point that Meng Hao lifted the spear up and then threw it violently ahead of him.

“BREAK!” he roared. The spear transformed into what looked like a lightning bolt as it shot through the rift in the Tribulation Clouds and headed toward the Immortal Palaces.

It sped through the void like a hot knife through butter. The rift in the Tribulation Clouds grew larger, and numerous Immortals flew out to meet the spear. Massive booms could be heard as many of the Immortals were destroyed. The spear itself stabbed into one of the Immortal Palaces, causing it to explode.

In that moment, Meng Hao’s speed reached an apex. He transformed into a beam of prismatic light that sped through the rift in the Tribulation Clouds.

However, it was then... that the Tribulation Clouds began to seethe and contract. Suddenly, massive pressure radiated out as numerous clouds formed together into an enormous hand, which then slapped toward Meng Hao. The huge hand filled his field of vision, obscuring everything else as it shoved him back down toward the ground.

A fierce gleam appeared in his eyes, like a bloody blade filled with ferocity.

“Trying to get in my way?”

# Chapter 969: 30,000-meter Dharma Idol!

The Tribulation Clouds were enormous, and to anyone else in the Immortal Realm, the pressure they exuded would be incomprehensible. However, Meng Hao already had eight Immortal meridians, Immortal meridians that were simply incomparable to normal Immortal meridians.

In addition, he had his true Immortal fleshly body!

His level of preparation going into this Immortal Tribulation was unheard of, and made him preeminently qualified to face it.

When you added in his Eternal stratum, it made it so that when he looked at the enormous descending hand, a crazy idea suddenly sprang up in his mind.

Immortal Tribulation... had always been a situation in which the cultivator almost passively transcended the tribulation by madly avoiding or rushing past the Tribulation Lightning and then ramming open the Door of Immortality amidst the hail of lightning.

Everyone had used similar methods. Pill Demon, Fan Dong'er, and Fang Wei had done things in such a manner, as had all of the other Chosen who had recently stepped into true Immortality.

Upon opening the Door of Immortality, Immortal light would pour out, and the Tribulation Clouds would dissipate.

As of this moment, Meng Hao's face filled with a wild look as his idea developed. A vicious aura rose up, transforming into a domineering air as he looked at the gigantic hand, and then punched out.

"I will walk the path of true Immortality! If the Heavens approve, so be it! If they don't approve, too bad! That is my domineering path to Immortality! Therefore, I should handle things... in an unprecedentedly domineering way!"

"For me, it's Immortality or death!" He threw his head back and let out a long cry as he shot like a meteor toward the huge hand. When they slammed into each other, booms echoed out in all directions. The air

shattered, and the huge hand collapsed. Blood sprayed from Meng Hao's mouth, and his hair was thrown into disarray. However, his Eternal stratum surged, and then, blood-colored light swirled around him, forming a bloody mist which quickly transformed into an enormous Blood Demon head.

It flashed as it shot toward the tribulation Cloud and the endless bolts of lightning up above. In Blood Demon head form, Meng Hao slammed into the Tribulation Clouds, causing booms to echo out in all directions. Yet again, a massive rift opened up.

However, the Tribulation Clouds churned, and quickly began to repair themselves. And yet... the result of this constant cycle of destruction and repair was that the amount of Tribulation Clouds up in the starry sky was reduced!

The Tribulation Clouds were not infinite and without number. As Meng Hao destroyed them, their numbers lessened; apparently, if someone attacked them continuously, then the shocking Tribulation Clouds... would eventually completely dissipate.

Something like that had never, ever occurred before throughout all the years!

However, that didn't mean... that it couldn't happen!

The crazy idea that Meng Hao had just come up with was that if the Tribulation Clouds wanted to block his way... Then he would bash them into nothing! He would destroy them completely!

THAT was domineering!

That was the way to do things! When you entered true Immortality, the only option was to make a huge scene!

The Blood Demon head collapsed, and Meng Hao hovered there in mid-air, surrounded by booming lightning. Every bolt of it caused him to tremble, and yet, his true Immortal fleshly body was able to withstand it easily. His Eternal stratum continuously healed him, and his eyes shone with obsession. His cultivation base surged, and his Dharma Idol launched

endless attacks against the Tribulation Clouds.

One punch! Another! And another!

Colors flashed in the sky, and the lightning surrounding Meng Hao appeared to be boundless. From time to time, blood sprayed from his mouth as he was flayed over and over. However, he didn't hesitate for a moment as he charged forward and attacked yet again.

The clouds churned, and simultaneously, began to visibly shrink!

The sight of it caused all the members of the Fang Clan to stare in speechless shock.

All of the other cultivators on Planet East Victory who were watching couldn't stop themselves from gasping at the shocking sight.

Fang Wei stared in amazement, and the killing intent in his eyes grew to a shocking level of intensity.

"He overestimates himself!" he thought.

Fang Xiushan stared in shock, panting, not daring to believe what he was seeing.

The Grand Elder's eyes were wide as he watched Meng Hao. He almost felt as if he were watching Meng Hao's grandfather, or his father Fang Xiufeng. Both of them were people who had given him such a sensation of madness.

Underneath the Fang Clan, the seven Patriarchs were visibly moved. This was especially true of the Seventh Patriarch, who was already relatively familiar with Meng Hao. As of this moment, he looked up at Meng Hao with an expression of praise and approval.

"To become a domineering true Immortal, you must have a domineering will," said the Fang Clan's Earth Patriarch, who was also a member of Meng Hao's bloodline. His voice soft and his eyes contained deep praise. "This kid... might just succeed!"

The Fang Clan was shaken, and the cultivators in the sects and clans in the outside world were utterly shocked.

Fan Dong'er gasped when she sensed the madness in Meng Hao.

"I can't believe he's picked this way to do things," she thought.  
"There's... there's no way it will work!"

Zhao Yifan was shaken mentally. Song Luodan stared with wide eyes. Wang Mu was panting. Taiyang Zi watched with an expression of complete disbelief.

As everyone reacted to the insanity of Meng Hao's actions, he coughed up some more blood. By now, the lightning around him was not red, but black, and was even more powerful than before. A vicious expression could be seen on his face as he faced the black lightning, backed by his Dharma Idol, which began to grow from a height of 21,000 meters to 24,000 meters!

He was like a stage 8 Immortal fighting against Immortal Tribulation!

"Nothing is impossible!" he thought. Determination could be seen in his eyes. He performed an incantation gesture, causing numerous mountains to appear, which then shot toward the Tribulation Clouds. As they exploded, Meng Hao advanced decisively, going on the offensive with all of his might.

Massive booms filled the air. The ground quaked, and his 24,000-meter Dharma Idol battered the Tribulation Clouds, causing them to get smaller and smaller. Time passed, and it was impossible to say exactly how many black lightning bolts had struck Meng Hao. His Eternal stratum was in full operation, and his eyes were completely bloodshot.

And yet, he never ceased attacking.

The gigantic Tribulation Clouds gradually shrunk smaller and smaller. At a certain point, the black lightning bolts turned into five-colored lightning bolts, and the clouds had shrunk down by thirty percent of their original size!

This sight left all observers in the Ninth Mountain and Sea completely shocked.

Meng Hao's hair was disheveled, but he looked as shocking as ever as he

did something completely unheard of in history!

“Time to enter the realm of the... Stage 9 Immortal!” Surrounded by five-colored lightning, Meng Hao threw his head back and roared. His Dharma Idol exploded up, growing from 24,000 meters to 27,000 meters!

As of this moment, everything was shaking violently!

“That’s... a 27,000-meter Dharma Idol, similar to a stage 9 Immortal! Just how much did Fang Hao prepare for this? What type of cultivation does he practice? He hasn’t even opened the Door of Immortality, and yet his power has already reached such an incredible level!”

“Chosen! That is a real Chosen! He’s so powerful! If he steps into true Immortality, he’ll basically be invincible!”

“I remember now, he has a true Immortal fleshly body! If his cultivation base reaches the true Immortal Realm, then... He’ll be an Immortal Realm Paragon!!” Rumbling filled Planet East Victory, and all of the cultivators watching in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were completely shocked.

“Who could possibly compare to him? Not Fang Wei and not Fan Dong’er. None of the other Chosen can measure...perhaps the only one who could....”

“The only one who can compare... is Fang Mu!”

“Fang Mu! He was the one who became the number one figure in the Ninth Mountain and Sea in the Three Great Daoist Societies’ trial by fire!”

“To bust open the Tribulation Clouds and destroy them completely.... Perhaps Fang Mu could also pull it off...!”

Everyone watched in shock as Meng Hao’s 27,000-meter Dharma Idol battered the five-colored lightning with its fists. The clouds shattered and collapsed, and the lightning dissipated.

Everything went quiet. Meng Hao hovered there alone in the sky for a moment before charging at the Tribulation Clouds again. His 27,000-meter Dharma Idol ripped away at them. From the look of things, Immortal Tribulation was by no means invincible when it was up against

Meng Hao.

Time passed. The clouds in the starry sky continued to dissipate. By now, they had been reduced by about forty percent. The five-colored lightning was incapable of standing up to Meng Hao's 27,000-meter Dharma Idol. But then, the lightning became seven-colored!

The seven colors combined, and the lightning didn't even seem like lightning any more. It appeared to contain life force, and it rumbled toward Meng Hao, seemingly incapable of being obstructed. As it neared, Meng Hao felt a sense of deadly crisis.

Without any hesitation, he unleashed his Immortal meridians. Behind him, his Dharma Idol grew from 27,000 meters to an astounding 30,000 meters! Everyone... was completely and utterly shocked!

A 30,000-meter Dharma Idol!

Golden light emanated out, illuminating the lands below. As the seven-colored lightning descended, the 30,000-meter Dharma Idol punched out. The lightning exploded, and blood oozed out of the corners of Meng Hao's mouth. However, he continued to hover there in midair, just like before.

"Impossible!" Fang Wei suddenly rose to his feet, a look of complete shock on his face.

Off to the side, Fang Xiushan's jaw dropped, and he staggered backward, his eyes wide.

The Grand Elder was in the crowd, staring at Meng Hao's Dharma Idol, and his face flickered several times.

"It's actually... 30,000 meters...." he murmured.

The most excited of all were the members of the direct bloodline, as well as Fang Daohong and Fang Linhe. The two of them stared up into the sky at Meng Hao and his 30,000-meter Dharma Idol, and they knew that becoming followers of Meng Hao was definitely an incredible stroke of good fortune!

All of the members of the Fang Clan, all of the cultivators on Planet East

Victory, were sent into a tumult.

“30,000 meters.... It’s really 30,000 meters! I don’t know how Fang Hao did it, but he’s actually... equivalent to a stage 10 Immortal before even stepping into true Immortality!”

“Stage 10 Immortal! That’s... that’s a realm of legend! Even Fang Wei and the others only opened 90 or so Immortal meridians. Fang Wei himself only opened 98!”

“This Fang Hao... if he... if he manages to open the Door of Immortality, then what do you guys think? How many... meridians will he actually open? A hundred?”

The entire Ninth Mountain and Sea was completely shaken. Fan Dong’er’s face fell as she stared at the crystal. She was panting like she never had before in her life. The old woman who stood next to her watched with gleaming eyes. She knew that with a 30,000-meter Dharma Idol, these Tribulation Clouds now posed no further threat to Meng Hao.

Even if the tribulation grew more intense, it was nothing more than Immortal Tribulation, and would never exceed the power of the Immortal Realm.

Zhao Yifan’s mind reeled, and his eyes grew blank.

Song Luodan stared in shock, and Taiyang Zi gaped. Wang Mu gasped. The only one who didn’t react in such a way was Wang Tengfei, whose eyes began to glow with unprecedented brightness.

Li Ling’er’s face fell, and Sun Hai’s scalp went numb.

The Chosen of the various sects and clans were completely astonished by Meng Hao’s 30,000-meter Dharma Idol.

“If he really manages to open the Door of Immortality... How many meridians will he open?!” That was the question that raged through the minds of each and every Chosen, and filled them with bitterness.

By now, Meng Hao made them feel completely powerless.

As for the Patriarchs of the various sects and clans, the same question

was running through all their minds regarding Meng Hao, this peerless member of his generation. How many meridians would he open...?

# Chapter 970: Paragon Immortal Palaces!

The 30,000-meter Dharma Idol shone with boundless golden light as it struck the seven-colored Immortal Tribulation Lightning. Meng Hao closed his eyes, and then began to merge with his Dharma Idol. When he opened his eyes, he was his Dharma Idol and his Dharma Idol was him!

A fist descended, and the Heavens rumbled. A huge gap opened up in the Tribulation Clouds, and at the same time, numerous bolts of seven-colored lightning crackled toward Meng Hao.

He did nothing to evade, instead allowing the Immortal Tribulation Lightning to strike him. He spread his arms wide, and his eyes were filled with nothing but the Tribulation Clouds.

BOOOOMMMMM!

Time passed. The Tribulation Cloud clouds shrank down to sixty percent of their normal size. Fifty percent. Forty percent.... The seven-colored Immortal Tribulation Lightning seemed to be endless. Meng Hao's Eternal stratum worked ceaselessly, and his 30,000-meter Dharma Idol attacked relentlessly, causing Heaven and Earth to tremble as divine abilities were unleashed.

Meng Hao threw his head back and howled. At the same time, his Dharma Idol suddenly expanded in all directions. Simultaneously, Meng Hao extended his right hand, within which appeared a rift.

The rift only lasted for three breaths of time.

It was the Fifth Demon Sealing Hex. During those three breaths of time, that rift became like a black hole in the void. It emanated an incredibly shocking gravitational force that instantly sucked the Tribulation Clouds into it.

Thirty percent. Twenty percent. Ten percent!

RUMBLE!

When the rift vanished, the vast majority of the Tribulation Clouds had vanished with it. There weren't even enough to cover all of Planet East

Victory. Meng Hao hovered there in midair, face ashen, but filled with a desire to battle that was even more intense than before.

He looked up at what remained of the Tribulation Clouds up in the sky, as well as the Immortal Palaces that floated behind them. Currently, they did not emanate as much threatening pressure as before.

“Hey, Tribulation Clouds. SCRAM!” Meng Hao said coolly, waving his right hand. His Dharma Idol separated from his body, transforming into a golden beam of light that pierced through the Tribulation Clouds and then suddenly exploded.

The explosion caused the remaining Tribulation Clouds to roil, after which a roaring sound echoed out from within as the clouds... shattered into pieces that scattered in all directions.

Everyone looked on as the Tribulation Clouds... vanished!

In that moment, all of Planet East Victory went completely silent. Both the members of the Fang Clan as well as the other cultivators stared in shock at the sky which was now completely empty of Tribulation Clouds.

Transcending tribulation in this way was something completely unprecedented!

Transcending tribulation with such madness was domineering to an incredible extent!

It was as if Meng Hao was prepared to destroy anything that blocked his way along his path to Immortality.

No one had ever been able to do something like this before, because no one had ever been comparable to a stage 10 immortal when transcending tribulation.

This was... like saying, “If I want to become an Immortal, the Heavens can’t do anything to stop me!”

This was... a domineering attitude that said, “If I want it, the Heavens had BETTER have it! If I don’t want it, the Heavens had better NOT have it!”

It seemed unbelievable, but if one thought about it carefully... when someone was equipped with the battle prowess of the one hundred meridians of a stage 10 Immortal, then to that person, there was nothing impossible when it came to transcending Immortal Tribulation.

After a brief moment of silence, Planet East Victory burst into a huge commotion. Everyone in the Fang Clan was yelling in excitement.

They saw the look of madness, fervor, and obsession in Meng Hao's eyes, and they knew that he was a member of the Fang Clan. The glory he brought to himself made them proud.

"Fang Hao!"

"Fang Hao!!"

"Fang Hao!!!"

Numerous figures flew up into the sky to sit cross-legged close to Meng Hao. None of them took any action, they just sat there... as Meng Hao's Dharma Protectors!

The entire direct bloodline mobilized. Fang Xi looked excitedly at Meng Hao, then threw his head back and laughed. Other than the direct bloodline, most of the other people who moved out to help Meng Hao... were members of the neutral clan branches. After seeing the future prospects that Meng Hao's performance displayed, they were moved in an unprecedented way.

When it came to choosing between Meng Hao and Fang Wei, they chose... Meng Hao!

Fang Wei stood there silently, looking at Meng Hao. Yet again, his eyes flickered with the desire to do battle. In contrast, Fang Xiushan stood next to him, face pale, glaring at Meng Hao and roaring inwardly.

"Damn you, Fang Hao! Why did you have to show up! You already left the Fang Clan! Why did you have to come back!? Why did you have to reach Immortal Ascension!? Why?!?!"

"And you, Fang Xiufeng! You were always ahead of me, always stifling

me. And now, just when my own son is rising up like a qilin, your good-for-nothing child is suppressing him!!” Fang Xiushan just couldn’t keep calm. His entire body trembled, and his eyes shone with venomous hatred.

The Grand Elder stood there, silent and taciturn.

Fang Wei’s grandfather sighed softly and looked over at Fang Xiushan, his expression one of disappointment. Then he turned back to look at Fang Wei, and his expression changed to that of anticipation.

Planet East Victory was completely shaken, and the sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea were astonished. By this point, Meng Hao’s name and face were firmly fixed within the minds of countless people, and many people were thoroughly fascinated to the point of zealotry.

Of course, all of the Chosen watched in taciturn silence.

“This matter isn’t concluded yet. The Immortal Tribulation hasn’t dissipated, and the Door of Immortality hasn’t been opened. We have yet to see... exactly how many Immortal meridians he will open!”

Thoughts such as these were going through the minds of all of the Chosen who had recently ascended to true Immortality. Their eyes were all fixed in the direction of Planet East Victory and Meng Hao.

The Patriarchs of the various sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea sighed, exchanged glances with those around them, and then began to discuss the matter.

“Who of this generation can possibly match up to Meng Hao...? Perhaps only the famous star of the Three Great Daoist Societies’ trial by fire... Fang Mu!”

“Fang Mu is obviously an assumed name. Nobody knows who he really is.... However, the Nine Seas God World accepted him as a disciple, and he still hasn’t accepted the top prize from the Three Great Daoist Societies. Eventually... he will definitely make an appearance.”

“Perhaps he is the only one who can actually compare to Meng Hao. This generation doesn’t belong to us any more, it belongs to them...”

Actually, they weren't the only ones thinking of Fang Mu. There were many other cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea who also remembered Fang Mu's eye-catching performance!

He took first place in the Three Great Daoist Societies' trial by fire!

The old man from the Nine Seas God World with whom Meng Hao had developed a good relationship that year sighed. The Patriarch from the foremost of the Three Great Daoist Societies, the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite, stared in the direction of Planet East Victory and smiled slightly, and his eyes shone with a bright gleam.

"You are connected to the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite by destiny.... Eventually, you will make your way here."

Meng Hao floated in midair above Planet East Victory, his hair floating around him. He took a deep breath, and his Eternal stratum continued to work as he looked up into the Heavens.

There were no Tribulation Clouds. The only thing left in front of him were boundless Immortal Palaces that obstructed his path to the Door of Immortality.

The Door of Immortality hovered there behind the Immortal Palaces, emanating powerful pressure.

"The character 'Immortal' is made up of one person and one mountain. I should have a Dao Corroboration Mountain...." Meng Hao looked at the Immortal Palaces for a moment and then began to advance forward.

"My Dao Corroboration Mountain should be the mountain which forever remains in my memory.... Mount Daqing.

"It's too bad that Mount Daqing is still in the State of Zhao, which was taken away by that bastard Patriarch Reliance. And right now, I have no idea where that old turtle bastard has gotten off to.

"Since that's the case, I will just have to become my own mountain. My fleshly body will be my mountain, and my soul will represent my life. One person 人, one mountain 山. I... am an Immortal 仙!" Meng Hao's energy surged, and his speed increased. In the blink of an eye, he was directly in

front of the Immortal Palaces.

In that instant, the figures moving about inside the Immortal Palaces looked like celestial soldiers. They turned toward Meng Hao and then charged in attack. At the same time, roaring sounds emanated out of the Immortal Palaces, which also flew toward Meng Hao in attack. They apparently wanted to crush him, and powerful Immortal might surged out as they neared.

At first glance, it almost seemed impossible to count how many Immortal Palaces there were. However, there were actually 100,000, and they were illusory, not corporeal. They looked like 100,000 seal marks, crushing down toward Meng Hao. Furthermore, the Immortal Palaces actually emanated... the energy of a Paragon of the Immortal Realm!

This was a tribulation that only an Immortal Realm Paragon was qualified to transcend.

Colors flashed, and the starry sky shook as 100,000 Immortal Palaces screamed toward Meng Hao in illusory form.

Incredible pressure weighed down on all the lands, causing Planet East Victory to shake. Meng Hao was the sole focus of this Immortal Tribulation, which he could sense on a profound level. It felt like innumerable heavenly mountains were crushing down onto him.

His cultivation base surged, and his 30,000-meter Dharma Idol shone with golden light as it leveled a punch toward the first of the incoming Immortal Palaces.

As the Dharma Idol punched out, celestial soldiers vanished, and the incoming Immortal Palace began to fall apart. In contrast, his Dharma Idol trembled a bit.

Next, a second Immortal Palace was destroyed, then a third, and a fourth.... One Immortal Palace after another was crushed. Blood oozed out of Meng Hao's mouth as he continued to attack.

Unfortunately, he was slowly being pushed back down toward the surface of the planet. The Immortal Palaces never seemed to end, and

apparently, they wanted to crush Meng Hao down into the ground and grind him into pieces!

Every attack against the Immortal Palaces resulted in a backlash, making things increasingly difficult for Meng Hao. He could crush 10 of them, destroy 100, shatter 1,000. But... there were 100,000 in total!

Their energy continued to rise, and the aura of an Immortal Realm Paragon spread out. It was as if all Immortals... would be forced to kowtow to this aura!

If you didn't kowtow, you would be crushed!

When the members of the Fang Clan saw what was happening, they grew increasingly nervous. The other cultivators on Planet East Victory were shocked. This Immortal Tribulation was something they had never seen the likes of before.

Fang Xiushan was getting excited. He stared at Meng Hao, wishing that the Immortal Palaces would become a hundred times more powerful than they already were, and completely eradicate Meng Hao in an instant.

The Patriarchs of the various sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea appeared to be visibly moved, and discussed the matter in hushed tones.

"Those are images of Paragon Immortal Palaces!"

"Only a Paragon among Immortals would be able to fight back against an Immortal Tribulation like that!"

"I'm afraid that this Fang Hao... will proceed no further than this step."

Even as they murmured, Meng Hao punched out against another Immortal Palace. Blood sprayed from his mouth, and his Eternal stratum operated ceaselessly. His eyes grew even more vicious than before.

"They're merely projections of Immortal Palaces with Paragon auras.... Well, I'll just have to show this Immortal Tribulation... what the projection of a real Paragon entity looks like!"

"Now that I've come to this point, it doesn't matter if I expose my

identity. The time has come to show the Ninth Mountain and Sea that I am Fang Mu, and Fang Mu... is none other than me!" Meng Hao took a deep breath and extended his right hand, waving it through the air to employ his most powerful Paragon Daoist magic.

# Chapter 971: I am Fang Mu!

Originally, Meng Hao had planned to keep his identity as Fang Mu secret, as a contingency for after he left the Fang Clan. But as of this moment, he had changed his mind. Instead of keeping Fang Mu hidden away and concealed, he would make a grand entrance!

He would make sure that everyone in the Ninth Mountain and Sea know that Meng Hao was the number one Chosen of the Fang Clan. At the same time, he was Fang Mu, the number one competitor in the Three Great Daoist Societies' trial by fire!

He was also a Conclave disciple of the Nine Seas God World! Although this move might seem like it could put him in danger later, in actuality... being so famous was also somewhat of a protection!

Keeping things low key was fine, but if you made a move, the best thing was to shock everyone!

Meng Hao's eyes shone with a strange light as he hovered there in midair, the center of all attention. Countless spectators all over the Ninth Mountain and Sea were using various methods to watch him as he lifted his right hand into the air and waved it toward the approaching Immortal Palaces.

In response to the wave of his hand, colors flashed, Heavenly bodies trembled, and a huge wind kicked up. Planet East Victory shook, and roaring sounds echoed out, causing all cultivators to tremble as they sensed an indescribable pressure exploding out from Meng Hao.

The starry sky shook as innumerable ripples spread out, and the aura of a Paragon rose up from Meng Hao, growing more powerful and shocking by the moment.

His gaze was like a sharp blade, filled with obsession, making him look like an Immortal divinity.

As of this moment, the faces of all the members of the Fang Clan flickered.

Deep underneath the ground, the seven Patriarchs of the Fang Clan were all shaken!

“That aura....”

“That aura is similar to that of the Immortal Palaces, except stronger!”

“That’s....” Fan Dong’er’s eyes widened, and the old woman who stood behind her stepped forward to peer into the crystal. Gradually, her eyes filled with astonishment.

“It’s him!” she thought. Even though this old woman had a Dao Realm cultivation base, she couldn’t help but gasp.

At the same time, the expressions on the faces of the Patriarchs in the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto changed. Imposing beams of sword light rose up into the sky, then swept out in all directions.

“That’s... the aura of a Paragon Daoist magic!”

“This Meng Hao, he.... Could it be that he....”

Other than the Ji Clan, the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite of the Three Great Daoist Societies was the most powerful entity in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, and they were more shocked than anyone. Inside a courtyard in the Daoist Rite temple, the Patriarchs’ energies surged as they looked toward Planet East Victory and Meng Hao’s aura.

“Pāramitā’s Paragon Bridge!”

Li Ling’er looked silently at what was happening. Everyone else was shocked, but she was calm. She had long since realized that Fang Mu... was none other than Meng Hao!

“Does this era belong to him...?” she thought, sighing inwardly.

It would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to find other people in the Ninth Mountain and Sea who knew the truth about this matter. Even considering the aura he was emitting right now, most people were shocked, but hadn’t yet made the connection with Fang Mu

Meng Hao floated there above Planet East Victory, his clothes whipping in the wind, his aura rising to a terrifying degree. It continued to grow

more and more intensely powerful.

After the space of a few breaths of time, the feeling he gave people of his being a Paragon grew even more intense. The Immortal Palaces roared toward him until they were only a few dozen meters away.

Meng Hao looked up, and his eyes shone with sharp light. It was in that exact moment that he waved his hand, causing his Immortal meridians to rotate and his cultivation base to explode out. The imprinted image of the Paragon Bridge that existed in his mind suddenly appeared in the starry sky.

The world seemed to go still, and everything in Heaven and Earth stopped moving. A huge bridge appeared, enormous and emanating an ancient and primordial aura. It was a boundless energy that placed it above anything in Heaven and Earth.

The bridge grew rapidly, and in the blink of an eye, it exceeded the 100,000 Immortal Palaces in front of Meng Hao, completely suppressing them.

Boundless light shone out, accompanied by innumerable magical symbols. The aura of a Paragon caused everything to shake, and the Immortal Palaces seemed cowed. Even the planet itself seemed forced to acquiesce, as if this bridge were a path to becoming a Paragon that one powerful expert after another had walked upon!

Rumbling echoed out, and the planet quaked. It was as if everything in the world suddenly went dark except... for the Door of Immortality, which hovered there high in the starry sky, equally matched and standing in stark opposition to the bridge.

In the instant that the bridge appeared, Fang Wei felt as if an invisible punch had just viciously crushed him. His face went ashen, and he staggered backward several paces, his face filling with an expression of disbelief. He stared up at Meng Hao, and the astonishing Paragon Bridge with its Paragon aura!!

“This is impossible! This... This is....” Fang Wei’s mind was reeling. He recognized the bridge, and was well-aware that it was the divine ability

created by Fang Mu during the Three Great Daoist Societies' trial by fire!

In recent days, many people had speculated that Fang Wei was actually Fang Mu. Fang Wei had been enigmatic and done nothing to dispel such rumors. He didn't admit to being Fang Mu, but neither did he deny it. Because of that, quite a few people made speculations that led them to the conclusion that he... was actually Fang Mu!

It was only as of this moment that Fang Wei found out to his bitterness that he had essentially turned himself into a clown. The real Fang Mu was actually... Meng Hao!

He almost couldn't believe it, and he wasn't alone. The other members of the Fang Clan looked over at the bridge, their minds reeling.

"Fang... Fang Mu?"

"I've seen that bridge before! In the Three Great Daoist Societies' trial by fire, the first place competitor Fang Mu created it as a divine ability!"

"This... don't tell me... Fang Hao is actually Fang Mu!?!?" The entire clan was shocked. Fang Yunyi stood in the crowd, and his vision went dark. The world seemed to be spinning; he simply couldn't imagine how Fang Mu... could be Meng Hao!

Fang Xiushan's mind filled with roaring, and his face was pale white as he stared at the Paragon Bridge up in the sky. In the past, he had suspected that the Fang Mu from the Three Great Daoist Societies' trial by fire was actually a member of the Fang Clan. However, he had quickly dismissed the idea that there was someone else in the Fang Clan who could possibly outdo his own son, who was the number one member of his generation.

Now that he realized that Meng Hao had been Fang Mu all along, he felt his entire world spinning in reverse.

Fang Wei's grandfather sighed bitterly.

The members of the direct bloodline were extremely excited. No matter if it was Fang Xi or Meng Hao's 19th Uncle, they all found the matter hard to believe. They had watched Fang Mu during the trial by fire, and now

they gasped as they realized that... Meng Hao was the only one who could possibly be Fang Mu.

"Is he really... Fang Mu?"

The Grand Elder's heart pounded violently. He was extremely familiar with the name Fang Mu.

All of Planet East Victory was shaken by the appearance of the Paragon Bridge. More and more people began to think of Fang Mu. At first, they were a bit hesitant to accept the truth. However, the Paragon Bridge was a divine ability created by Fang Mu, and a divine ability like that... could not possibly have been created a second time by someone else.

"Meng Hao. Fang Hao. Fang Mu.... He really is Fang Mu!"

As of this moment, all of the cultivators of the various sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea looked on with shock, their minds reeling.

As for the various Patriarchs, their minds trembled. This was especially true of the Patriarchs of the Three Great Daoist Societies. Fang Mu was the first place winner of the Three Great Daoist Societies' trial by fire. After defeating Zhao Yifan, he disappeared into the Ruins of Immortality. They had assumed he died, and yet, here he appeared now, as a Chosen of the Fang Clan!

As for the other Chosen who had just stepped into true Immortality, their minds were also spinning.

"I should have guessed that he was Fang Mu!" murmured Taiyang Zi. Song Luodan stood there silently, and Wang Mu gnashed his teeth.

Everyone was completely shaken!

Meng Hao hovered there above Planet East Victory. He took a deep breath as his long hair flew about. He knew that as of this moment, his identity as Fang Mu had been revealed, and that the Ninth Mountain and Sea was surely in an uproar. However, he didn't care.

"Yeah, I'm Fang Mu!" His eyes shone with a bright light as he looked at the Paragon Bridge that stretched out over the 100,000 Immortal Palaces

toward the Door of Immortality.

Down below the bridge, the Immortal Palaces trembled, as if they couldn't bear the weight of the Paragon's aura that emanated out from the Paragon Bridge.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered, and his desire to do battle surged. He kept his eyes fixed on the Door of Immortality as he moved forward and set foot on the Paragon Bridge.

His first step caused deafening rumbling sounds to spread out through all of Planet East Victory. As the sound echoed out into the starry sky... 10,000 Immortal Palaces instantly shattered into pieces!

They crumbled into debris that scattered about and then dissipated out into the stars....

One step onto the Paragon Bridge destroyed 10,000 palaces!

It was a single step onto the Paragon Bridge, but anyone watching got the feeling that Meng Hao was stepping out into the stars. 10,000 Immortal Palaces were destroyed, sending ripples out in all directions, and completely shocking all the observing cultivators.

Heaven and Earth shook as pressure from the bridge, the will of a Paragon, demolished the Immortal Palaces. Yet Meng Hao also suffered a major backlash; he could use the Paragon Bridge, but only at great cost. He coughed up a mouthful of blood, but his expression remained one of determination as he took a second step.

The second step instantly caused another 10,000 Immortal Palaces to shatter into pieces. A huge wind kicked up that swept the debris out into the starry sky.

No one had ever seen an Immortal Tribulation like this. The Immortal Tribulations experienced by all the other Chosen were like nothing compared to what Meng Hao was going through.

At the same time, nobody had ever transcended Tribulation in such a fashion. He completely destroyed the Tribulation Clouds, and crushed the Immortal Palaces one step at a time. As of this moment, everyone was

bearing witness to Meng Hao's surging energy.

When he took a third step, his aura surged out again. It was as if he was the only existence in all Heaven and Earth, a splash of color amongst black and white. At the same time, the inner backlash from using the Paragon Bridge grew stronger. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, causing the bridge to be stained a garish red as he passed.

And yet, he didn't stop for a moment. He braced himself against the inward shaking, endured the trembling of his cultivation base and the power of the backlash. He took a fourth step, then a fifth, and then a sixth!

The Paragon Bridge only had ten portions!

As Meng Hao took each step, 10,000 Immortal Palaces were destroyed. It happened a third time, a fourth time, a fifth time!

He took six steps, and his energy soared. The Paragon Bridge shone with boundless light, as did Meng Hao himself!

# Chapter 972: Barrage on the Door of Immortality

“The will of an Immortal Realm Paragon....”

“This Fang Hao is shifting the paradigm; in the Immortal Realm, now that he’s ahead of everyone, he’ll be ahead of them every step of the way!”

“From now on, he’s going to be completely famous in the Ninth Mountain and Sea!”

Everyone looked at Meng Hao up in the sky, and their hearts were filled with the same thought: “This era belongs to him!”

Everyone in the Ninth Mountain and Sea watched Meng Hao take six steps that destroyed a total of 60,000 Immortal Palaces. The sight was incredibly moving.

As of this moment, the shattered Immortal Palaces served as a foil to Meng Hao. The Paragon Bridge was the background of the image, and the picture it all painted was now firmly etched in the minds of all onlookers.

The Chosen of the Ninth Mountain and Sea stared silently. Even Wang Tengfei was left speechless. They could only watch as Meng Hao walked forward, destroying the Immortal Palaces in the process.

Fang Wei’s face was pale white. Meng Hao’s Immortal Tribulation was shocking, and his method of transcending the tribulation was astonishing. However, Fang Wei refused to back down.

“Let’s just wait and see how many Immortal meridians he gets after he opens of the Door of Immortality!” Fang Wei’s eyes were completely crimson.

Everyone watched as Meng Hao calmly took a seventh step. Cracking sounds emanated out from his body, and blood spattered onto his clothing. His face was pale white, and his Eternal stratum worked like mad to restore him, although by now it was unable to keep up with the backlash he was receiving. His legs were shaking, but the 10,000 Immortal

Palaces underneath his feet also shook, then crumbled into pieces like the ones before them had.

Meng Hao's eyes were bloodshot. By now, he wasn't even paying attention to the Immortal Palaces. Now that he was standing atop the Paragon Bridge, he suddenly began to experience a vision of the past. He saw all of the people who had tread the bridge in bygone years.

This bridge was a bridge that allowed people to reach the highest of heights. The bridge had been shattered, but the Paragon's aura still was there, a manifestation of its former glory. Anyone who could reach the end of it would feel a sense of unmatched supremacy like that of a Paragon of Heaven and Earth.

Meng Hao wiped the blood from his mouth as his hair whipped around him. He watched as countless vague images of people from former times appeared and walked past him.

"I can do it too!" he murmured, stepping forward an eighth time.

The instant he took the eighth step, the Paragon Bridge rumbled, and another 10,000 Immortal Palaces were shattered. By now, there were only 20,000 left!

The ninth step!

Heaven and Earth rumbled, and all the cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea that were looking on felt their minds racing. They recalled everything that had happened in the Three Great Daoist Societies' trial by fire. They thought back to how they had felt as they watched Fang Mu.

Right now, that same feeling returned as they looked at that very same person!

As they stared at Meng Hao, they felt like they were suffocating as they waited to see if he would reach the end of the Paragon Bridge, destroy all of the Immortal Palaces, and stand in front of the Door of Immortality.

Amidst the rumbling, Meng Hao's eyes glowed with the desire to do battle. Another 10,000 Immortal Palaces were destroyed as he... took his

final step.

The tenth step!

As he took that final step, the remaining 10,000 Immortal Palaces beneath the Paragon Bridge shattered into fragments. They were destroyed, exploded into bits that were swept out into the wind, accompanied by what sounded like a roar of rage.

Apparently, they refused to accept that they were being dispersed, and were unwilling to approve of Meng Hao becoming a true Immortal in this way!

However... it didn't matter if they approved or not. They had no choice but to accept it!

All of the Immortal Palaces were completely destroyed and eradicated. Then, the Paragon Bridge slowly faded away from beneath Meng Hao's feet. In the blink of an eye, it was gone. He trembled as the full force of the backlash caused blood to spray from his mouth. He staggered in place, almost as if he were on the verge of falling down out of the sky. However, he forced himself to hang on, and his body trembled so badly it looked like it might collapse.

The Paragon Bridge was a trump card for Meng Hao, but considering the level of his cultivation base, it was all he could do to take the ten steps he had. After passing over the Immortal Palaces, the full force of the backlash seriously injured him. Were his willpower even slightly weaker, he would not have been able to reach the end.

However, everything was worth it!

Meng Hao's eyes shone with a brilliant light as he stood there in front of the majestic Door of Immortality!

Intense roaring sounds filled the air, echoing out in the Fang Clan, in Planet East Victory, and in all of the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

The members of the Fang Clan were in an uproar, and the other cultivators on Planet East Victory were equally shaken.

"He destroyed the Immortal Palaces with ten steps! Fang Hao did it!"

"He scattered the Immortal Tribulation Clouds and destroyed the Immortal Palaces! Transcending tribulation in this manner is completely unheard of! He definitely deserves his reputation as Fang Mu!"

"He's forcing his way through the tribulation! How domineering! Perhaps that's the nature of his Dao!"

Gradually, people were starting to get a vague understanding of Meng Hao's Dao!

It was completely domineering, as if nothing and no one could stand in his way! Or perhaps, it would be better to say that since he truly believed that he would eventually surpass everyone else, the one person he perpetually wanted to supercede was himself!

He ignored all others and only tried to outdo himself.

Neither his personality nor what he said mattered; these were spurious. His true will... was one of complete domineering!

Freedom! Independence! Those two things were domineering as well!

The members of the direct bloodline were extremely excited. The rest of the Fang Clan was abuzz. Planet East Victory was in an uproar.

All of the other sects and clans were astonished to a profound degree by the way Meng Hao was transcending his tribulation.

"He's in front of the Door of Immortality now! Now the only thing left to do is open it!"

"Push open the Door of Immortality, bathe in the Immortal light, and open Immortal meridians!"

"I wonder... how many meridians he will open!?!?"

All of the cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, including the Chosen and the Patriarchs, were wondering the same thing.... How many Immortal meridians would Meng Hao open up!?

"He's already built himself up to the level of a stage 10 Immortal. He'll

probably open up 99 meridians!"

"I wonder if it's possible... that he'll actually open... 100 Immortal meridians!?"

The uproar continued throughout the various regions in the Ninth Mountain and Sea as everyone discussed the matter of how many meridians Meng Hao would open. By this point, everyone was wondering about it.

"How many can he open...?" thought Fan Dong'er as she gazed into the crystal.

Li Ling'er stood there quietly, but in her heart, she had already answered the question. Meng Hao would definitely open... 100 meridians!

Zhao Yifan, Taiyang Zi, Song Luodan, Sun Hai and the other Chosen were all panting.

By now, even Fatty, Chen Fan, and other people familiar with Meng Hao were now watching the scene play out in their respective sects.

On Planet South Heaven, Shui Dongliu looked up, and a smile broke out on his face.

"His era has arrived... the era of true Immortality."

Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li stood in the Tower of Tang, looking at a huge mirror. Within, they could see Planet East Victory and Meng Hao.

Also on Planet South Heaven, on Mount Blood Demon, the previously death-like aura of Blood Demon suddenly flickered with a final trace of life force.

"At long last...." the ancient voice echoed out. "In the moment before my death, the moment I have been waiting for arrives. The time has come for me to give you my last gift of good fortune."

Where the temple hall once existed in the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple, there was now only a crater. As of this moment, an old man suddenly appeared there, gazing up into the starry sky. Next to him was a withered Resurrection Lily, within which flickered a bit of life force.

"Immortal meridians..." the old man murmured. "You owe him some Karma, you know. Ah, forget it, I'll just pay him back for you." He looked down at the withered Resurrection Lily on the ground next to him.

In the Church of the Emperor Immortal, Sun Hai stood there. A young woman was at his side, staring out into the void. All of the disciples of the Church of the Emperor Immortal were all watching a huge screen, and Meng Hao's image upon it.

"Come on, little brother, you have to open 100 meridians!" the young woman murmured to herself. She was none other than Fang Yu. Suddenly, she felt a creepy stare, which caused her to turn viciously and kick Sun Hai in the shin, causing a sharp twinge of pain. However, a doting look appeared on his face, and he turned to look at her.

"Babe, you can kick me a few more times if you want. The harder the better...."

His expression, and his wording, caused goosebumps to cover Fang Yu. Everyone was now completely focused on Meng Hao....

He looked up at the enormous Door of Immortality. Compared to it, he was like a speck of dust.

"The Door of Immortality...." he murmured. His eyes brimmed with the desire to fight, and even as his injuries healed, he stepped forward, clenched his hand, and then punched out toward the Door of Immortality.

"Open up!" he roared, his voice echoing like thunder. A huge boom could be heard as his fist made contact with the Door of Immortality. The sound echoed out, shaking the lands. Suddenly, a crack appeared as... the door began to open!

As soon as that crack appeared, boundless Immortal light spilled out, lighting up the Heavens and shining out into the starry sky.

The resplendent Immortal light poured out from the Door of Immortality, becoming a beam that pierced out into the darkness, illuminating everything.

Although it was only a crack, the Immortal light was filled with strong Immortal qi that shot toward Meng Hao and poured into him.

His eyes shone with brilliant light. All of the cultivators watched closely, and there was no question in any of their minds as to whether or not he would succeed. They knew he could open it.

What they were concerned with was how many Immortal meridians he would end up with after the door was opened!

Meng Hao's expression was one of determination as the Immortal qi poured into him. His eight current Immortal meridians transformed into eight dragons that swirled around him madly, absorbing Immortal qi and making him stronger.

However, a tiny crack was not good enough for Meng Hao.

His 30,000-meter Dharma Idol appeared behind him. Radiating golden light, it stepped forward. At the same time, Meng Hao transformed into a huge golden roc, which joined the Dharma Idol in bashing against the Door of Immortality.

“OPEN UP!” he roared again. As he slammed into the door again, it opened... a little bit more!

More Immortal light poured out, along with strong Immortal qi!

As of this moment, countless spectators gasped as they watched Meng Hao attacking the Door of Immortality.

An incredible power radiated out from the Door of Immortality, and as the Immortal qi poured into Meng Hao, blood sprayed from his mouth. However, his eyes shone with even brighter light than before.

He lifted his right hand, causing numerous mountains to appear. They formed together as they smashed into the Door of Immortality. At the same time, a Blood Demon head appeared, which butted against the door.

And of course there was his 30,000-meter Dharma Idol, which battered the door with its huge hands. Heaven and Earth shook, and booms rang out in all directions. The Door of Immortality slowly opened wider,

causing more light and Immortal qi to surge out.

As of this point, the door had opened enough... that a person could slip through!

# Chapter 973: Opening the Immortal Meridians

In that moment, an incredible light shone out from the Door of Immortality, which transformed into the image of an ancient head. The head looked at Meng Hao and then let out a roar that echoed out like a powerful attack. Blood sprayed from Meng Hao's mouth, and he staggered back. As for the Door of Immortality, it slowly began to close!

Everyone in the Fang Clan was completely shocked by this. When Fang Wei attacked the Door of Immortality, it had only continued to open wider and wider. It had never shown any signs of closing back up. Everyone gasped.

"What's going on? This Door of Immortality... is so hard to open!"

"Fang Hao's Tribulation Clouds were different than everyone else's, plus there were those Immortal Palaces. It's only to be expected that his Door of Immortality is unusually hard to open!"

Fang Wei's eyes glittered as he stared at Meng Hao, and it was clear that he wanted to fight. As for Fang Xiushan, the killing intent in his eyes grew stronger, and his expression was transforming into one of wild joy.

"He can't open the Door of Immortality!"

The cultivators from the sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea were all shocked by what they were seeing.

"Immortal Tribulation like this, and a Door of Immortality like this, would be impossible for any other Chosen to deal with!"

"It's hard to say whether Fang Hao... will actually be able to open the Door of Immortality!"

Outside of Planet East Victory, within the starry sky, Meng Hao was forced backward by about 3,000 meters before coming to a stop. He wiped the blood from his mouth as he looked at the Door of Immortality with a vicious gleam in his eyes.

His cultivation base suddenly exploded with power, and his 30,000-meter Dharma Idol reappeared. He fused with the Dharma Idol, transforming into a 30,000-meter giant that took a 3,000 meter step forward to appear directly in front of the Door of Immortality.

He raised both of his hands, placed them onto the Door of Immortality, and roared. Then he shoved forward violently, causing massive rumbling sounds to echo out in every direction.

The Door of Immortality trembled, sending a powerful backlash attack against Meng Hao. He shook as his Eternal stratum exploded out, restoring him even as he rotated his cultivation base and shoved again violently.

RUMBLE!

The Door of Immortality opened by another crack, causing Immortal light to shine out in the starry sky once again. Immortal qi spread out, and Meng Hao's eyes turned red. He gritted his teeth against the backlash, and went all out, pushing with all the might he could muster.

RUMMMMBLLLE!

The Door of Immortality slowly opened wider, causing more Immortal light to spill out. In the blink of an eye, it was just as open as it had been before. The face of the old man that had been materialized by the Door of Immortality appeared once again. He roared in rage at Meng Hao, and once again, powerful light exploded out in an attack against Meng Hao.

This time, Meng Hao was ready. Even as the force descended upon him, he stepped backward and performed a double-handed incantation gesture, then shoved his hands straight out in front of him. Immediately, his eight Immortal meridians sparkled, causing eight streams of power to flow out into his right hand. He then unleashed a punch directly toward the old man's face, causing the Immortal qi to shoot out.

In the blink of an eye, they slammed into each other, sending a huge boom echoing out in all directions. The face faded away, and the eight streams of Immortal qi swirled together and returned to Meng Hao. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and yet, his desire to fight was even stronger. He

stepped forward, placed his palms on the Door of Immortality, then began to push.

The Immortal light grew stronger, and the Immortal qi more dense. Booms echoed out as the Door of Immortality opened further.

All of the things that had just happened left everyone completely amazed.

“What was that just now? Eight streams of Immortal qi?”

“What divine ability was that...?”

All areas of the Ninth Mountain and Sea were in a complete commotion. Blue veins popped out on Meng Hao’s forehead as the Door of Immortality opened wide enough for a person to fit through, but not Meng Hao’s Dharma Idol.

“I completely destroyed the Tribulation Clouds and shattered all of the Immortal Palaces. As for the Door of Immortality... if it remained closed, it wouldn’t matter. But once I start, I’m going to open it all the way and step inside!” Meng Hao’s eyes were completely bloodshot as he once again rotated his cultivation base and shoved against the door. It opened a bit more, and yet, in that same instant, he suddenly backed up.

As he did, glittering starlight appeared within his left eye. In the blink of an eye, light began to pour out of his eye, transforming into a beam of light 3,000 meters long. Then it was 30,000 meters long, enveloping Meng Hao completely. It was at this point that... five characters appeared in Meng Hao’s mind.

One Thought Stellar Transformation 一念星辰变 !1

It was the most powerful Daoist magic of the Fang Clan’s first generation Patriarch!

Rumbling rose up as the light surrounding Meng Hao began to spread out. The starlight flew out of his left eye, transforming into the starstone. The starstone rapidly dissolved, forming a liquid that shot toward Meng Hao and, in the blink of an eye, completely covered him.

In the space of a few breaths of time, even as the Door of Immortality was closing, the light that surrounded Meng Hao vanished. In his place, there was no longer his normal form, but rather, what appeared to be... a gigantic asteroid!

The asteroid was fully 3,000 meters wide, and shocking to the extreme. The void around it cracked and shattered, as if the mere appearance of the asteroid was enough to rock the starry sky.

Next, an intense aura exploded out from it. Countless motes of starlight appeared, which then descended onto the asteroid's surface.

All of a sudden, it didn't look like an asteroid any more, but rather, a planet!

A droning sound began to emanate out from the planet as it smashed into the Door of Immortality. Everyone watching was filled with shock as the huge stone bashed into the door.

“One Thought Stellar Transformation!!” gasped the Grand Elder, his face flickering as he stood there among the other members of the Fang Clan.

As soon as his words echoed out, other clan members gasped as they gaped in astonishment at the enormous stone.

“What?! That’s.... One Thought Stellar Transformation!?”

“That’s the first generation Patriarch’s most powerful Daoist magic, One Thought Stellar Transformation! Supposedly, you can use it to actually transform into a planet! It can basically destroy anything!”

“Fang Hao actually acquired the One Thought Stellar Transformation when he went into the ancestral Land! According to the clan’s ancient records, the most powerful form of that magical technique is that you can transform into a real planet!”

All of the cultivators on Planet East Victory and the rest of the Ninth Mountain and Sea were shocked by Meng Hao assuming planetary form. At the same time, that very planet slammed into the Door of Immortality, causing a huge boom to rattle out.

Ripples spread out in every direction; apparently the attack had contained enough energy to cause tremors to spread far and wide. The Door of Immortality shuddered, and a massive wind kicked up. In the blink of an eye, the Door of Immortality opened completely.

One swift attack, and the Door of Immortality opened wide!

It was as if a sluice gate had been opened. Boundless Immortal light spread out rapidly, filled with wildly surging Immortal qi.

In that moment, the planet vanished, and Meng Hao reappeared. His face was pale, and he coughed up four or five mouthfuls of blood as the Immortal light and qi surrounded him.

The boundless Immortal qi surged into him, filling him. His eight Immortal meridians trembled, and began to transform. Immediately, a ninth Immortal meridian began to form!

However, outside of his body, and visible outside of the Door of Immortality, what people saw was not a ninth meridian, but rather, the first meridian.

Whenever someone reaches true Immortal ascension, in the moment that they open the Door of Immortality, their Immortal meridians will cause images of Immortal dragons to appear above the Door of Immortality.

Right now, the first Immortal dragon was rapidly solidifying high above Meng Hao and the Door of Immortality, swirling in the air.

Immortal qi surged and glittered brightly, illuminating the starry sky until it seemed like daytime. Everyone watching on Planet East Victory cried out in shock.

“The Door of Immortality... opened!”

“He’s opening his Immortal meridians! I wonder how many meridians Fang Hao will be able to open!?!?”

Countless cultivators were watching as the first Immortal dragon appeared above the Door of Immortality. As it roared, a second Immortal

meridian formed, then a third and a fourth and a fifth.

In the blink of an eye, boundless Immortal qi, which far exceeded what had come from the bronze dragon in the ancestral land's necropolis, inundated Meng Hao. 10. 20. 30 Immortal meridians appeared.

30 Immortal dragons swirled through the air, roaring. Each one of those Immortal dragons was noted by the audience in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, and caused their hearts to tremble. They stared blankly, especially the other true Immortal Chosen, whose hearts were pounding.

"Those are... those are Immortal meridians?"

"How come each one of his Immortal meridians seems to be multiple times bigger than the Immortal meridians that appeared for everyone else who just achieved true Immortal Ascension!?!?"

"The level of difficulty of his Immortal Tribulation was unheard of. His Door of Immortality was so hard to open! Considering he succeeded, it's little wonder that his Immortal meridians exceed that of others. They're so strong!"

Everyone in the Fang Clan on Planet East Victory was completely shocked. Fang Wei watched with a pale face, staring at Meng Hao. Despite everything Meng Hao had done to fight against the Immortal Tribulation and open the Door of Immortality, Fang Wei still wanted to battle him.

Even as expressions of shock could be heard throughout Planet East Victory, the cultivators from the various sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea looked on with astonishment as Meng Hao opened his Immortal meridians.

"The strength of his Immortal meridians represents his battle prowess within the Immortal Realm," said the old woman next to Fan Dong'er, her voice soft as she peered into the crystal. "He will be incomparable.... He experienced Paragon Immortal Tribulation, and he has become... the only Paragon Immortal!"

The Patriarchs of the other sects and clans also came to similar conclusions as they watched Meng Hao with glittering eyes and thoughtful

hearts.

Meng Hao stood in the Door of Immortality, bathed in Immortal light, surrounded by Immortal qi. Rumbling echoed out in all directions as boundless Immortal qi poured into him. Cracking sounds could be heard as 40 Immortal meridians opened, and then more!

41. 45. 50....

Amidst all the rumbling, the Immortal dragons outside the Door of Immortality were now 50 in number. They flew around, roaring, causing anyone who heard the sound to be completely shocked.

However, things weren't over yet!

55. 60. 70. 80....

80 Immortal dragons appeared outside of the Door of Immortality in a relatively short period of time. Those 80 Immortal dragons exuded shocking energy as they flew around in the starry sky.

Meng Hao's body was surrounded by roaring. His body felt like it was being shredded as the boundless Immortal qi poured into him, causing the 81st Immortal meridian to form....

Soon, the 81st meridian was finished, after which was the 82nd. Then there were 83.

As everyone in the Ninth Mountain and Sea watched, Meng Hao reached 90 Immortal meridians!

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1. I left in the Chinese characters of One Thought Stellar Transformation so you could see the "five characters" that were mentioned, despite the translation being four words.

# Chapter 974: More than 100 Meridians!

90 Immortal meridians swirled around the Door of Immortality. Each and every one of them was multiple times larger than any of the Immortal meridians of the other Chosen who had recently ascended to true Immortality. They looked fierce, the dragon scales glinting, the claws sharp as razors. Their bodies were stalwart and filled with shocking energy.

The light blazing out from the Door of Immortality was matchlessly majestic. As the Immortal qi appeared within the Immortal light, it seemed almost infinite, eternal and never-ending as it surrounded Meng Hao, boring into his pores to fill his entire body.

It was a baptism, a type similar to that experienced by any true Immortal who opened the Door of Immortality.

The more thoroughly one prepared, the deeper the resources one built up, then the more extravagant the baptism would be.

Intense rumbling echoed out of Meng Hao's body as the Immortal qi headed toward his 91st Immortal meridian. It didn't take very long at all for the 91st Immortal meridian to fully form.

Yet another Immortal dragon appeared outside of the Door of Immortality.

92 meridians. 93 meridians. 94 meridians.... After the time it takes an incense stick to burn, the Immortal qi pouring into Meng Hao caused 95 meridians to appear inside of him.

All of the sects and clans on Planet East Victory, as well as those out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, were completely shocked.

"95 meridians! He's already exceeded most of the other Chosen!"

"I wonder if he'll be able to exceed Fang Wei with his 98 meridians? Fang Wei of the Fang Clan is currently the number one true Immortal!"

As the buzz of conversation filled the air everywhere, Fang Wei stared up at Meng Hao. Inwardly, he was beginning to get nervous; he couldn't

stand the idea of someone else stealing any of his glory, and his eyes filled with a savage light as he glared at Meng Hao.

Fang Xiushan gritted his teeth; his hatred for Meng Hao had reached a pinnacle.

Of course, in sharp contrast, the members of the direct bloodline were extremely excited. They looked excitedly at Meng Hao; to them, it was as if they were looking at the hope for the direct bloodline to rise again.

RUMBLE!

Roaring sounds echoed out from Meng Hao as a 96th Immortal dragon appeared. After that was a 97th. After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn... a 98th Immortal dragon appeared in the starry sky outside the Door of Immortality!

It started out fairly blurry, but quickly became clear. After a few breaths of time passed, the Immortal dragon was fully formed. It soared about, emitting shocking roars.

Before anyone from the Ninth Mountain and Sea could react, more rumbling sounds emanated out from Meng Hao's body. Directly next to the 98th Immortal dragon, shockingly, there appeared yet another blurry image of an Immortal dragon.

It rapidly became visible, turning into a 99th dragon!

Instantly, the Ninth Mountain and Sea was thrown into a huge tumult, and shouts of astonishment could be heard in every direction.

The Fang Clan was completely silent for a moment, after which they exploded into complete pandemonium from the shock and astonishment, of personally witnessing... the rise of a true Chosen!

"99 Immortal meridians! He's surpassed Fang Wei to become the number one blazing sun of the Fang Clan!"

"For years, nobody has ever reached this height! Fang Hao... is the only one!"

"99 Immortal meridians! That's only one meridian away from the

legendary great circle!” The Fang Clan was flabbergasted. As for Fang Wei, he stood there calm and quiet, eventually closing his eyes.

However, it was possible to see how he felt inside from the trembling that wracked his body. After Meng Hao opened 99 meridians, he was filled with an unspeakable disquiet. He didn’t dare to watch any longer, for fear that he might lose his will to fight.

He wasn’t the only one. As of this moment, the other true Immortal Chosen of the Ninth Mountain and Sea all closed their eyes. They... chose to pay no further attention to Meng Hao.

They had their own Daos, and their own paths. If they lost self-confidence in their ability to proceed forward, if they lost their Dao hearts, then their cultivation base would be eternally unable to progress any further.

Meng Hao had long since become a huge mountain blocking the path of all other cultivators of his generation!

Unless someone could split that mountain open, it was possible to predict that the mountain-like Meng Hao would crush all other Chosen of his generation, and continue unobstructed to the pinnacle.

Fang Xiushan’s face was pale and bloodless. In the moment that Meng Hao opened his 99th meridian, it was like an invisible fist smashing into his heart. He clearly understood that as of this moment, Meng Hao... had already soared high into the Heavens.

“Yeah, but he’s only in the Immortal Realm!” thought Fang Xiushan. Deep within his eyes, a gleam of madness suddenly sparked to life.

As of this moment, everyone was speculating as to whether or not 99 meridians would be Meng Hao’s true limit. Meng Hao’s face glowed with the light of obsession as he rotated his Immortal meridians, causing Immortal power to flow through him. After it performed a full cycle, it suddenly exploded out!

In that instant, an intense, tearing pain suddenly shot through him, and a rumbling sound once again emanated out.

It was as if yet another Immortal meridian was suddenly gouging itself into his body.

"100 meridians!" he roared.

Shockingly, all of the Immortal dragons outside of the Door of Immortality suddenly stopped in place and looked up at the shadowy, sinuous figure that had just appeared.

It looked like a shocking bolt of electricity, and its image instantly exploded like thunder into the minds of the cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

The 100th Immortal dragon formed outside of the Door of Immortality. After the space of a few breaths, it was clear to all onlookers!

It was absolutely clear that this was the 100th Immortal dragon!

As soon as it became visible, the spectators felt as if their hearts were being struck by lightning. Gasps could be heard, along with loud cries of shock and alarm that echoed throughout the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

100 meridians had been opened, and 100 Immortal dragons swirled above the Door of Immortality, causing astonishing roars to fill the air!

100 Immortal dragons joined their voices together in a shocking roar that shook the land and caused the heavenly bodies to tremble.

The members of the Fang Clan were silent as they stared in shock at the 100 immortal dragons flying outside the Door of Immortality. After a long moment, shouts of astonishment rang out.

"100 meridians.... He really opened 100 meridians!!"

"Our Fang Clan... has produced a blazing sun that opened 100 meridians!"

"Fang Hao! Meng Hao! Fang Mu! From this day forward, his name will completely shake all of the Ninth Mountain and Sea!"

The direct bloodline was going crazy, as was the rest of the Fang Clan, and even all of the other other cultivators on Planet East Victory.

They looked up at Meng Hao, and all they could see was his shadowy form wreathed by boundless Immortal light. However, their eyes were filled with fervor.

100 meridians, fully opened, was a legendary Realm that virtually no one had entered for countless years. Meng Hao... was the first!!

Fang Wei finally opened his eyes and saw the 100 Immortal dragons, and blood oozed out of his mouth. He clenched his hands into fists.

Fang Xiushan began acting abnormally; his eyes revealed a menacing glint which grew stronger and stronger.

Off to the side, the Grand Elder was shocked. His eyes grew cloudy as he thought back to the scene of Meng Hao returning to the clan, standing in East Heaven Gate, his Bloodline Gatebeam rising 30,000 meters into the air.

All of the seven Patriarchs underground had risen to their feet and were looking at Meng Hao, their expressions unprecedently solemn.

“This kid is a future Paragon of the Fang Clan!” the Seventh Patriarch said softly. He glanced over at the Sixth Patriarch, who looked shocked. However, a strange coldness also gleamed within the Sixth Patriarch’s eyes.

Planet East Victory was boiling with excitement, as were the sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. As for the Chosen, many who had opted to close their eyes now opened them and looked at the 100 Immortal dragons swirling around Meng Hao. Their hearts grew increasingly heavy.

“100 meridians? It is what it is! It’s a legendary Realm, but who cares? So what if he’s an Immortal Realm Paragon?!”

“This isn’t going to stop me from fighting him!”

“That’s nice. He has his Dao, and we have our paths. Nothing... is set in stone yet!” The Chosen stood there silently, their eyes flickering with the desire to fight.

“Finally... it’s over.” As everyone looked at the Immortal light inundating Meng Hao, and the shocking sight of his 100 meridians, they knew that his good fortune of opening the Door of Immortality was now over.

However, it was in that moment... that people suddenly realized, the Immortal light and qi were continuing to swirl madly around Meng Hao as he stood there in the Door of Immortality. He took a deep breath, and his eyes shone with a bright light.

“Since my identity as Fang Mu has been revealed,” Meng Hao murmured, “then a mere 100 meridians simply isn’t enough....” He threw his head back and let out a shocking cry.

RUUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLE....

The shocking sounds grew more intense, spreading out in all directions as the light shining from the Door of Immortality grew more magnificent, and even more Immortal qi was released.

Anyone who could see what was happening was thoroughly shocked.

“Hey... what’s going on?!”

“Could it be that he’s going to open 101 meridians!?”

“That’s impossible! 100 meridians is already a thing of legend! How could he possibly open 101?”

Everyone looked on with disbelief and astonishment as the eight Immortal meridians that he had already possessed suddenly began to manifest on the outside!

101 meridians. 102 meridians. 103 meridians! 104 meridians!!

In the blink of an eye, he had four more meridians!

As of this moment, everyone in the Ninth Mountain and Sea who was watching, regardless of whether they were ordinary cultivators or Patriarchs of the various sects and clans, all felt their eyes go wide and fill with disbelief. Everyone went silent.

Even as they stared at Meng Hao and his 104 meridians, a 105th meridian appeared!

“Come on!” Meng Hao roared as the Immortal light and Immortal qi surged into him. The sound of his shout echoed out into the starry sky as... a 106th meridian appeared!

Blue veins popped out on Meng Hao’s face as the 107th meridian appeared!

“COME ON!” he roared. A shocking rumbling echoed out through all of Planet East Victory, piercing into the starry sky as 108 meridians appeared!!

The 108th meridian that appeared was actually... the very first meridian that he had ever formed!

By this point, the hearts of countless spectators in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were pounding madly.

What they saw was 108 Immortal dragons swirling around the Door of Immortality, fierce and savage. They also saw Meng Hao, wreathed in Immortal light. From the way he looked... he wasn’t satisfied!

\*

Note from Deathblade: Normally I don’t translate the post-chapter notes from Er Gen. However, this one seemed noteworthy. Apparently some people noted in the comments of the original chapter releases about how long this tribulation arc was taking. I’m including THIS note, because sometimes people mistake Er Gen’s notes for my notes. NOTE: the following note is a note from Er Gen, the author. Noted? Now, on to the note:

Note from Er Gen: I saw some complaints from various Fellow Daoists, and want to assure you that I have tried to condense the action as much as possible. If I cut things down any further, the chapters won’t be good.

I have written this way for all the seven years during which I worked on Renegade Immortal, Beseech the Devil, and I Shall Seal the Heavens. Whenever it comes time to transcend tribulation, it always requires, at minimum, six or seven chapters.

I don’t think that what I have written contains anything in waste. In fact,

the chapters about actually transcending the tribulation were only six in total. There were three for the Tribulation Clouds and three for the Immortal Palaces. Then there have been two so far which are about opening the Immortal meridians.

There will actually be some more about the Immortal meridians because this is not just a matter of simply opening the meridians, there are also a lot of unexplained plot points that will be resolved.

# Chapter 975: Blood Demon and Resurrection Lily!

All cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea who were watching looked completely astonished and tongue-tied as they observed the 108 Immortal dragons soaring through the starry sky outside the Door of Immortality above Planet East Victory.

"100 meridians is a legend, but 108? This... this is the first time I've ever heard of someone getting more than 100 meridians!"

"No one in the past has ever done this, and most likely, nobody in the future will either!" The Ninth Mountain and Sea was in a tumult, and that shock actually spread out throughout the Mountains and Seas.

All of the members of the Fang Clan watched with gaping mouths. They knew that Meng Hao was the type of person to defy the Heavens, but when they saw him open 100 meridians, they had assumed he was finished. They could never have imagined that Meng Hao would actually... open up 108 meridians all in one shot!

"Impossible!" Fang Wei went pale. He could reluctantly accept the idea of Meng Hao using the One Thought Stellar Transformation Incantation to open 100 meridians, and use that as an excuse for why he didn't measure up to Meng Hao. But now... 108 meridians had appeared, causing Fang Wei to completely lose self-control.

Fang Xiushan was trembling as he stood there in the crowd, and the icy aura inside of him flourished.

As far as anyone knew, the Fang Clan only had one Dao Realm expert, which was the Earth Patriarch. Currently, his eyes shone with a brilliant light as he murmured, "There's only one explanation.... Before he started transcending this tribulation, the kid... already had 8 meridians. He experienced something just like Kṣitigarbha, the Lord of the Fourth Mountain and Sea!"

His words struck like lightning into the hearts of the other six Patriarchs

present.

"The necropolis!" exclaimed the Seventh Patriarch. "I personally saw that kid enter the necropolis of the first generation Patriarch!"

Meanwhile, in the Nine Seas God World, Fan Dong'er staggered backward a few paces, her face pale. She looked bitterly at the images in the crystal, at the 108 Immortal dragons soaring around Meng Hao. She had no choice but to admit that there had already been a huge gap between her and Meng Hao, and that after reaching true Immortality, that gap... was only widening.

"Such profound preparation and reserves," murmured the old woman standing next to her. "In all the great Nine Mountains and Seas, the only person other than this kid to do something like this is... the number one most powerful expert, Kṣitigarbha! According to the legends, when Kṣitigarbha reached true Immortality, he opened more than 100 meridians. Very few people actually know how many, though.... After all, those events took place many, many generations ago." A strange gleam appeared in her eyes.

As of now, all of the true Immortal Chosen were staring at Meng Hao. They had no desire to look at Meng Hao's 108 meridians, and yet, they were unable to look away. To open so many Immortal meridians was something that shocked everyone.

That was especially the case when they realized that Meng Hao didn't seem to be happy with only 108 meridians. All of them gasped.

"Could it be... that he's actually planning to open more meridians!?!?"

Meng Hao was absolutely not satisfied!

Now that he had opened the Door of Immortality, he was completely confident that he could open more than 108 meridians.

"This is a rare opportunity," he thought. "Very rare. I'll only get this one chance...." He stared at the Door of Immortality, and realized that the glowing light was beginning to fade, and the Immortal qi was slowly beginning to dissipate.

He well knew that once this opportunity passed, it would be very difficult to get another chance like this in which he could absorb as much Immortal qi as he wanted, and then open more Immortal meridians.

That was something he was sure of based on his experiences with the slow and difficult process of opening his first Immortal meridian.

“However, it seems like 108 meridians really is my limit....” he thought, looking up at the 108 Immortal dragons flying about, which were the manifestations of his Immortal meridians.

Among those Immortal dragons, there was one that was azure in color. It looked especially graceful, and was much larger than all the other dragons. It emanated an ancient air that seemed to make it contemptuous of all Heaven and Earth. It was almost as if this dragon could make all the Heavens submit, and could force the Earth to bow in worship!

It was as if all the other dragons were following that azure-colored dragon, their roars filling all the Heavens.

The azure Immortal dragon was formed by none other than the very first of Meng Hao’s Immortal meridians, which was actually the last one to be opened!

As Meng Hao stood there silently, the Immortal light coming from the Door of Immortality faded even more, and was soon incapable of covering his entire body. The Immortal qi lessened, and the even Door of Immortality itself began to fade.

“Is it over?”

“So, his limit was 108 meridians, huh...?”

“Those extra eight meridians were his limit. Although he can’t open any more, his name is still going to rock the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea!”

As the discussions raged in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, Fang Wei stood there on Planet East Victory, and he gave an inward sigh of relief.

He wasn’t the only one. The other true Immortal Chosen all sighed deep in their hearts.

The intimidation they felt from Meng Hao only continued to grow more intense. Now that they saw the Door of Immortality dissipating, their sighs led to a stirring of their fighting spirit. All of them knew that they weren't his match, and yet they still wanted to fight him!

The Door of Immortality grew more indistinct, and the Immortal light grew darker. The immortal qi... was virtually gone.

The starry sky was no longer bright, and as Meng Hao stood there, he looked at the 108 flying Immortal dragons, and his eyes glimmered with regret.

"It's over.... 108 meridians." Meng Hao sighed and turned to head back to Planet East Victory, when suddenly, a tremor ran through his body. He stopped in place and turned his head to look out into the starry sky.

He was looking... in the direction of Planet South Heaven!

In that moment... a voice suddenly echoed out in his heart. It was extremely weak, and vastly ancient. It was like the voice of an old man who was about to die, a departed spirit who had forced itself to remain in the world of the living, never allowing that last gasp to escape. Even if the flame of his life was snuffed out, he would leave behind an ember that clung on by a thread. It was as if that final remaining spark had been waiting for this moment!

"Meng Hao... I only have one breath left, and it has been waiting for this day.... Allow me to use my fading life force to gift you with one last bit of good fortune!"

When Meng Hao heard that voice echoing in his mind, he recognized it instantly. It was... the voice of Patriarch Blood Demon from Planet South Heaven!

Patriarch Blood Demon's origins had not been made clear. However, Meng Hao knew that his terrifying fleshly body was buried under the surface of the lands of South Heaven. And in truth, in his heart, Meng Hao had already come to know the answer to the question of who he really was.

Patriarch Blood Demon... was one of the three Greater Demon generals of Lord Li, a figure referred to as a consummate expert!

"You are from the League of Demon Sealers," continued Patriarch Blood Demon in his ancient voice. "Furthermore, you are the Ninth Generation. I can speculate... about some of what will happen to you in the future, and therefore, I will tell you now what I can of the benevolent possibilities in your future. You don't understand right now... however, if you are able to combine the Nine Hexes in the future.... you will know how to repay me. Right now, I will do something that I hope will make you consider the question of... what Immortal meridians really are."

When Patriarch Blood Demon finished speaking, a stream of blood-colored Demonic qi exploded out from Mount Blood Demon on Planet South Heaven. At the same time, Patriarch Blood Demon's fleshly body, which rested under the surface of the land, dissolved, and became part of the stream of Demonic qi.

As the Demonic qi surged up into the Heavens, it transformed into a blood-colored magical symbol.

The magical symbol flickered nine times, then vanished.

In the moment that it vanished, Patriarch Blood Demon met his complete and utter end!

As he died, the magical symbol vanished, and simultaneously, Meng Hao felt the Blood Demon Grand Magic inside of him begin to rotate on its own. Rumbling sounds could be heard as a bloody light surrounded him, spreading out and... forming a 109th Immortal meridian!

It was... a Blood Demon meridian!

The previously fading Door of Immortality suddenly shook, and in the blink of an eye, was back to its previous state. The fading Immortal light suddenly exploded with intensity, covering Heaven and Earth, filling the starry sky. The Immortal qi grew stronger, descending onto Meng Hao's body and pouring into him.

The Blood Demon Grand Magic rotated inside of him, transforming into

a magical symbol, which was exactly the same magical symbol that had appeared in the moment of Patriarch Blood Demon's death on Planet South Heaven.

It was the color of blood, and after flashing nine times inside of Meng Hao, it began to melt, transforming into a shadowy Immortal meridian.

As the Immortal qi poured into him, the Immortal meridian grew more solid, and before long, it was complete! Meng Hao trembled as... a 109th Immortal dragon appeared!

The roaring Immortal dragon was the color of blood, and completely shocking in appearance. Endless ripples spread out from it in all directions, causing the cultivators of the Ninth Mountain to be completely stunned.

However, in the moment that the 109th Immortal meridian appeared, another tremor ran through Meng Hao, as he felt a different aura rising up inside of him, forming a powerful resonance!

That resonance was coming from... the same planet that Patriarch Blood Demon had just died on!

Meng Hao looked up, and his eyes flickered as he looked at what he considered to be his true home, Planet South Heaven.

Just vaguely, he could see the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple. There in the former location of the temple hall, he saw... what appeared to be a flower.

It was... a Resurrection Lily!

When the Resurrection Lily blooms with seven colors, petals fall, Immortal Ascension, one thousand years!

Meng Hao had been plagued with a Resurrection Lily for hundreds of years. In the end, he had severed it away. However, vestiges of it still remained, like memories that were very difficult to get rid of.

It was another type of Karma, or... a type of restitution!

On Planet South Heaven, in the vast Eastern Lands, in a wild stretch of

mountains, was a deep crater that was all that remained of the temple hall of the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple. An old man stood there, and next to him was a Resurrection Lily.

"My power is useless to the living...." he murmured vaguely, "but you... were bequeathed with the legacy of the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite. You took master's Soul Lamp, and changed your destiny.... The Resurrection Lilies sowed Karma with you, and now that you've reached Immortal Ascension, I will represent them to pay you back what they owe."

"If you can reach enlightenment regarding Immortal meridians, then it will be good fortune for you. Whether or not you understand is all up to you."

The man's words were muttered somewhat incomprehensibly, as if the arrangements of the words themselves had been thrown into chaos. The old man waved his right hand, causing the Resurrection Lily next to him to transform into ash.

As the ash swirled through the air, a violent tremor ran through Meng Hao. He gasped, and for some reason, he suddenly recalled all of his struggles with the Resurrection Lily.

The memories flowed like water, and as they did, the Karma that had built up from the years of struggle transformed into an aura, into a Resurrection Lily, into... a Resurrection Lily Immortal meridian!

As soon the Immortal meridian formed, Meng Hao's hair whipped about, and his body seemed to turn into a black hole that madly sucked in Immortal qi. Intense rumbling sounds filled the air as another Immortal meridian formed!

This was... his 110th meridian!

In the moment that the meridian appeared, a 110th Immortal dragon roared into being next to the Door of Immortality.

# Chapter 976: Dao Corroboration!

In the Nine Mountains and Seas, the Elder generation always passed down a certain tradition to the younger generation of Chosen of the various sects and clans. That tradition was that when the age of true Immortals arrived, one must remember the saying... preparation is the key to success!

By preparing well and accumulating profound resources, one could explode out with extraordinary power, and open up the most Immortal meridians possible.

Therefore, for generation after generation, people would make preparations for the time when the age of true Immortality arrived. They would hold themselves back at the peak of the Spirit Realm and wait until they could unleash all of their resources to achieve true Immortal Ascension.

Throughout all the years, that was how things were done. However, as of this moment, the Patriarchs of the Ninth Mountain and Sea were somewhat in a daze as they watched what was happening.

As they looked at Meng Hao, all of a sudden they seemed to come to an understanding.

Meng Hao also knew what it meant to prepare in advance to succeed.... It wasn't just a matter of cultivation base, nor was it simply about forming Immortal meridians in advance. It also had to do with... destiny!

Before someone attempted to achieve true Immortal Ascension, their advanced preparations involved the various destinies they encountered throughout their lives, as well as the Karma they sowed. All of those things were components to the preparation; however, there was a premise to such destiny....

"He is corroborating his own Dao to achieve Immortal Ascension...." said the Fang Clan's Earth Patriarch, his voice light and hoarse. His expression was one of enlightenment.

The old woman next to Fan Dong'er sighed.

"Only those who achieve their own Immortal Ascension can wrest away good fortune from Heaven and Earth," she said, "achieve true Immortal Ascension, and acquire the destiny to personally form Immortal meridians."

In that moment, all of the Patriarchs came to the same understanding. However, that didn't change anything. They had never personally watched while someone reached true Immortality on their own, but, they had seen far, far too many people fail.

It would be easier to find a phoenix feather or a qilin horn than to find someone who had succeeded; that was how rare they were. From ancient times until now... Kṣitigarbha was apparently the only person who had ever succeeded. Now, however, there was one more.

Although they reached this understanding, there were far more people who didn't understand. When the 110th Immortal dragon appeared, the Ninth Mountain and Sea was thrown into chaos. It was a commotion the likes of which had never occurred before.

It paled in comparison even to the time that Meng Hao, using the pseudonym Fang Mu, had seized the title of first in the trial by fire. It was hard to say who was the first person to begin to cry out, but soon, all of the cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea were yelling and shouting.

"Th-tha's... the 110th meridian!"

"Crazy! This is insane! How could there possibly be an Immortal Realm cultivator in the world with 110 meridians!?!?"

"Wait a second, something seems weird. Those two Immortal dragons that just appeared look different from the others. One is blood-colored! The other one... looks even more mysterious!"

The 110th Immortal dragon was very unique and, although it emanated intense Immortal light, for some reason it gave people the impression that it was related to plants and vegetation. In fact, if you looked closely, you could even see that the dragon had seven different colors circling around

in its body.

Amidst the astonished cries of the crowds in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, Meng Hao stood there up in the starry sky, his heart calm as he probed these two new Immortal meridians. When he did, he could clearly sense Patriarch Blood Demon and the Resurrection Lily.

As of this moment, all of the destiny and good fortune he had built up was now exploding out.

“Now I understand that destiny is a type of preparation,” he murmured. “In light of that, what exactly are Immortal meridians...?” Even as he reached some form of enlightenment, he continued to contemplate the 110 Immortal meridians inside of him.

“100 meridians really are a limit.... Cultivators’ bodies, their flesh and blood, can only form 100 meridians.

“My extra eight meridians are actually not part of my flesh and blood. They are actually a different kind of meridian, constructed on a foundation laid by the bronze lamp’s smoke!” 1

“It looks very similar to an Immortal meridian formed from flesh and blood, but actually, they are completely different on a structural level.

“As for the other two Immortal meridians, they are also different. They were formed from the consolidation of power, one from Patriarch Blood Demon and the other from the Resurrection Lily.

“Well then... what exactly are Immortal meridians...?” Slowly, he lifted his head, and his eyes shone with a bright light.

“Immortal meridians are a type of verification! They are a declaration to Heaven and Earth that one is qualified to become a true Immortal. It’s undeniable proof; it doesn’t matter whether Heaven and Earth approve or not, in the end they WILL acknowledge you. It is also .... Dao corroboration!

“That Soul Lamp’s power opened my path to true Immortality. My flesh and blood Immortal meridians pushed me to the pinnacle. The bronze dragon’s power helped me to expand upon that original Immortal

meridian. Then, the power of Patriarch Blood Demon and the Resurrection Lily helped me to open up more Immortal meridians, and also... to understand them!

"Immortal meridians acquired before true Immortality are a type of good fortune. However, all other types of preparations and magical techniques have the possibility to... become Immortal meridians!"

"That is a manifestation of power, and a kind of concrete representation of the Dao!"

"Anything... can become an Immortal meridian!" Meng Hao reached enlightenment at this point, at which point something like fetters shattered within him.

It was as if there were an obstacle inside of him that had suddenly shattered. As Meng Hao raised his head, his hair whipped about, and his clothes flapped in the wind. Brilliant light began to shine out of his eyes.

"I understand...."

Meanwhile, in the Ruins of Immortality, there was an Immortal's cave. Sitting in that Immortal's cave was a woman, the white-robed Paragon. A slight smile suddenly broke out on her cold face. That smile was faint, yet was something rarely seen on her.

"Pretty good intuition!" she said softly.

At the same time, there was a location in the Fourth Mountain and Sea that was filled with a sinister mist, within which was concealed the Yellow Springs, reincarnation, and the boundless underworld. This location was a resting place to which all dead souls eventually returned.

Within that mist was a palace built from richly ornamented buildings. It emanated an ancient, archaic air and dense Yin qi. Gradually, in the depths of that mist, an enormous figure became visible, who sat there cross-legged.

The figure looked like a statue, like an Immortal Divinity who exerted pressure over the entire underworld, as if he suppressed the entire Fourth Mountain and Sea. That figure's eyes seemed as if they would remain

eternally closed, and yet, in that moment, they suddenly cracked open slightly.

“So, I am not alone in my Dao....” he said slowly, his voice echoing out through the Fourth Mountain and Sea.

Back outside of Planet East Victory, Meng Hao’s eyes glowed, and as the cracking sounds emanated out of body, his enlightenment grew.

“Anything can become an Immortal meridian,” he thought. “Such a thing would be impossible for other true Immortals, but for someone who has reached true Immortality on their own, it is possible!

“Heaven and Earth cannot restrict or restrain me. I will not be caged by the starry sky, nor buried under the vault of Heaven!

“I don’t need any approval from Heaven and Earth! True, authentic Immortals approve of Heaven and Earth, not the other way around!” Rumbling filled Meng Hao’s mind. The cracking sounds grew more intense, and his body trembled even more violently. Brilliant light flickered out of his eyes as he suddenly raised his right hand and then pointed toward the Door of Immortality.

“I freely cultivated the Sublime Spirit Scripture!” Meng Hao murmured. “I reached the great circle of Qi Condensation, acquired the Perfect Foundation, the Perfect Core, the Perfect Nascent Soul! I formed Perfect Dao Fruit, and even broke through into the Eternal stratum!

“My will cannot be eradicated within an Eternity, so therefore, my Eternal stratum... will be the basis of my 111th Immortal meridian!

“OPEN!” In that moment, his Eternal stratum surged, causing numerous motes of light to appear inside of him. Those motes of light rapidly formed together, transforming into... a 111th Immortal meridian right next to his other 110 Immortal meridians!

The Door of Immortality trembled, and Immortal light surged out. Immortal qi poured into Meng Hao, solidifying his Eternal stratum Immortal meridian. The meridian grew stronger and stronger, and was soon completely formed!

At the same time, the 111th Immortal dragon appeared outside of the Door of Immortality. It was a dragon of Eternity which caused the starry sky to tremble with its roaring.

Everyone out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea stared in complete shock. When they saw the Eternal Immortal dragon appear outside the Door of Immortality, great waves of astonishment surged inside of them.

“Y-yet another... Immortal meridian?”

“Is he even human?”

“Could he be an ancient Immortal, reincarnated into modern times?”

Countless cries of shock could be heard.

The Dao Realm Patriarchs of the various sects and clans were even more shaken than the other cultivators. People like them were extremely rare, and most sects and clans only had one. However, as of this moment, all of them emerged from secluded meditation and stepped out into the starry skies to stare toward Planet East Victory.

“The Fang Clan... has produced an incomprehensibly exceptional person!” Waves of shock surged through the Patriarchs, and complicated expressions appeared on their faces.

“If he is allowed to reach his potential...the Fang Clan will flourish tremendously!”

“I’m afraid the course of future events is going to change. This matter isn’t necessarily good for the Fang Clan, and is even less beneficial for the rest of us. As for who is worst off... it’s the Ji Clan!”

“The last person to corroborate the Dao on their own was the Lord of the Fourth Mountain and Sea, Kṣitigarbha. Now another person has corroborated their own Dao....” The eyes of the Patriarchs from the various sects and clans flickered, many of them with hesitation.

It was at this point that more rumbling sounds emanated out from Meng Hao. More Immortal qi poured into him as a 112th Immortal meridian began to form inside of him.

This was a Qi and Blood Immortal meridian that he formed from his true Immortal fleshly body!

In the moment that Meng Hao achieved enlightenment on the fundamental nature of Immortal meridians, everything changed. Now, a 112th Immortal dragon roared into being next to the Door of Immortality.

Each and every one of this Immortal dragon's scales brimmed with the shocking power of qi and blood.

It was at this point that, all of a sudden, a beam of light shot out from the peak of the Ninth Mountain. The light was gray, and it pierced through the starry sky directly toward Planet East Victory.

The gray light moved with incredible speed, and seemed to be filled with the aura of Karma. Apparently, if any living being touched it, they would be infected by Karma, which could then be... severed!

The beam of light turned into a blade of Karma Severing which, in the blink of an eye, appeared outside of Planet East Victory and then slashed down toward Meng Hao, who was right in the middle of forming Immortal meridians!

Instantly, a cold voice echoed out from the Fang Clan's ancestral mansion beneath the surface of Planet East Victory.

"Ji Clan, dost thou dare!?"

It was the clan's Earth Patriarch, the Dao Realm Patriarch, whose face flickered as he suddenly vanished from his position and then reappeared out in the starry sky, right in front of the gray light. He waved his right hand, causing Essence power to surge out soundlessly. It slammed into the gray light; Karma power erupted, but was shattered and then faded away.

The Dao Realm Patriarch retreated a few paces, and when he raised his head, his eyes were cold and somber. He raised his hand and pointed out into the sky, causing a massive ripple to sweep out from his finger, transforming into a shield which surrounded all of Planet East Victory.

"Anyone who dares to mess with this qilin son of the Fang Clan will fight with me to the death! Even you, Ji Clan.... Don't force me to request

the first generation Patriarch's corpse to come out; I'll lug him up the Ninth Mountain on my back and then only one of us will come out alive!"

\*

1. Meng Hao laid that foundation with the bronze lamp in chapter 826.

# Chapter 977: Demon Sealer Meridians!

The Fang Clan's Dao Realm Earth Patriarch was a white-haired old man. He was tall and muscular, and as he hovered there in the starry sky, he emanated a powerful Essence aura that seemed capable of forcing all Heaven and Earth to acquiesce.

A gleam like that of lightning flickered in his eyes as he stared coldly out into the void. His piercing gaze tore through the starry sky all the way to the peak of the Ninth Mountain!

By this time, virtually all of the Dao Realm Patriarchs from the various sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea had emerged and were looking toward Planet East Victory. Each one was very quiet, and did not speak. However, their eyes flickered, and their hearts were anything but calm.

The Ji Clan could be considered the Paragon of the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

In the past, certain sects had put on a show of contending with the Ji Clan, but in reality, everyone feared them. If ever there came a situation in which real fighting might occur, they would back down.

Throughout all the years, very few situations had ever arisen in which real conflict occurred. Now, however... such a situation had now arisen with the Fang Clan!

And all of it was due to a single person...

Meng Hao!

Matters that pertained to the Dao Realm were not visible to the whole of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Only peak Ancient Realm cultivators could sense some of the pressure coming from up above. No one else had any idea.

Not even Meng Hao knew that by opening the Immortal meridians as he just had, he ended up rousing killing intent in the Ji Clan. Nor did he realize that the Fang Clan Patriarch had rushed to protect him in such a

domineering fashion.

The starry sky was silent for a long moment, after which the Ji Clan responded to the Fang Clan Earth Patriarch with a cold snort.

The snort turned into intense ripples that exploded out of the Ninth Mountain. The face of the Fang Clan's Earth Patriarch flickered in response. Suddenly, a cold voice echoed out from the Nine Seas God World in the Ninth Sea.

The voice was extremely archaic, and immediately filled the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea. Of course, nobody could actually hear it except for the less than twenty Dao Realm Patriarchs from the sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea who had currently revealed themselves. However, the words caused their minds to spin.

"Fang Mu is a Conclave disciple of the Nine Seas God World."

In the instant that the voice could be heard, the Ji Clan's energy suddenly faltered.

Next, another cold voice rang out from one of the other Three Great Daoist Societies, the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto on Planet West Felicity. The voice almost seemed to be echoing out from ancient times as it spread out through the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

"Fang Mu was named the top candidate by the Three Great Daoist Societies!"

In response to the voice, the Ji Clan's energy faltered again. Now, it seemed to be hesitating.

In the instant that the Ji Clan paused, yet another voice rang out from the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite on the Ninth Mountain. The voice was calm, but was filled with decisiveness that could sever nails and chop iron. It was a voice that was even more domineering than the one from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto!

"Fang Mu is connected by destiny to the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite. Fighting between him and members of his generation is permitted, but Elder generations slaughtering him is NOT!"

When the Dao Realm Patriarchs from the sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea heard these voices, their minds trembled, and their eyes shone with a strange light.

"The Fang Clan by itself couldn't possibly win in a fight against the Ji Clan, but they still can't be underestimated. The Ji Clan would surely suffer serious losses. However, if you add in the Three Great Daoist Societies...."

"The Ji Clan is definitely more than a match for any given sect or clan. However, if the Three Great Daoist Societies joined forces, they would easily be a match for the Ji Clan. Now that the Fang Clan has taken a stand, if the Ji Clan doesn't resolve the situation deftly, it could result in a huge war in the Nine Mountains and Seas!"

"Most important of all is that the Three Great Daoist Societies' reserves are far too profound.... The Lords of the Mountain and Sea may change, but the Daoist societies will exist for all eternity."

The Patriarchs' eyes glittered. However, some of them had secret connections to the Ji Clan, and these looked toward Planet East Victory with cold indifference.

The Ji Clan remained silent. Gradually, seemingly after having considered the situation, their energy dissipated and an ancient voice echoed out.

"Is this really worth it?"

Then, the Ji Clan's energy disappeared completely.

The auras of the Three Great Daoist Societies also faded away from the starry sky.

The Ninth Mountain and Sea returned to normal. Few people knew about what had just happened. However, the Fang Clan's Dao Realm Patriarch didn't return to his original position. Instead, he sat down cross-legged in the starry sky to stand as a Dharma Protector for Meng Hao.

As he looked at Meng Hao, who was not too far off, by the Door of Immortality, his mouth turned up into a slight smile, and his eyes gleamed

with anticipation.

“Alright, kid. It’s time for you to unleash all your potential. Show us what you have, and don’t be afraid. Cultivators like us need to live for glory!”

As if by some bizarre coincidence, more rumbling sounds could be heard as soon as the Fang Clan’s Dao Realm Patriarch looked over at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao’s hair and clothes whipped in the wind, and scintillating Immortal light and Immortal qi swirled around him.

Meng Hao’s eyes glowed brightly as his 112th Immortal meridian was completed. Now that he understood the nature of Immortal meridians, he wanted to determine exactly how well he understood them.

If he was going to rise to prominence, he might as well leave everyone completely and utterly shocked.

“I really want to know... exactly how many meridians I can open!

“My 113th meridian will be based on Hexing magic! The Eighth Demon Sealing Hex, Bodily Cultivation Hexing... that is my 113th meridian!” Meng Hao’s right hand flashed in an incantation gesture, then waved through the air. Intense rumbling sounds could be heard, and although nobody else could see it, the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex transformed into a magical symbol inside of him. Immortal qi poured into him, and began to solidify....

Another Immortal meridian rapidly formed, which then absorbed shocking amounts of Immortal qi until it was fully formed!

Meng Hao’s aura grew stronger, and at the same time, a 113th Immortal dragon appeared outside the Door of Immortality. Its roaring echoed out in all directions, shaking the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

This Immortal dragon shone with bizarre light, and if you looked at it for too long, you felt your cultivation base becoming rigid, and your body growing stiff.

All of the cultivators who saw it were filled with shock.

Before anyone could even begin to comment, though, more rumbling could be heard from Meng Hao as... he opened another Immortal meridian!

The Seventh Demon Sealing Hex, Karmic Hexing, began to send the aura of Karma out into his body. Not a bit emerged outside of him. Immortal qi was sucked in, and after the time it takes an incense stick to burn, the meridian was completely formed!

114 meridians!

Another Immortal dragon appeared, fierce and emanating a power of Karma that shook Heaven and Earth. The aura of the Ji Clan seemed to be on the verge of erupting again, but in the end, it didn't.

“OPEN AGAIN!” Meng Hao’s eyes shone with determination as he used the Demon Sealing Hexing Magic to form Immortal meridians. His aura grew stronger as he then moved on to the Sixth Demon Sealing Hex, Life Death Hexing!

Rumbling emanated out from his body as all of the cultivators from the Ninth Mountain and Sea looked on with wide eyes and open jaws.

Soon, the Sixth Hex completed its meridian inside of Meng Hao, and a 115th Immortal dragon appeared outside of the Door of Immortality!

“115 meridians! J-just... just how many meridians is this Fang Hao going to open!?”

“A Chosen like this is completely unheard-of....”

“How come he can open so many meridians? The most that other people were able to open is 98! There has to be some reason! It’s impossible for someone to have prepared so well and be so talented that they could reach such an inhuman level!” The Ninth Mountain and Sea was completely shaken, and countless cultivators were in an uproar. They had been shocked as it was when Meng Hao had opened 100 meridians, but now that he had reached 115, their shock had actually turned into suspicion.

They really didn’t understand how Meng Hao could possibly have outdistanced everyone else by so much!

Amidst their excitement, the members of the Fang Clan on Planet East Victory had also begun to conjecture, and all sorts of theories sprang up, but only the direct bloodline had no doubts at all and seemed to be filled with nothing but pure excitement.

Fang Wei looked up into the sky and clenched his fists tightly.

“Is it because he reached true Immortality on his own, and corroborated his own Dao...?” he murmured to himself. After taking a deep breath, he closed his eyes again and decided to watch no further.

“It doesn’t matter how many meridians you open.... I have Nirvana Fruits, so I can still kill you!”

It wasn’t just Fang Wei who was thinking along these lines. The other true Immortal Chosen of the Ninth Mountain and Sea also picked up on clues that led them to similar conclusions. In their hearts, they felt nothing but bitterness.

“So it turns out that corroborating the Dao on one’s own has this kind of effect....”

“But to corroborate the Dao on one’s own is monumentally difficult. Meng Hao must have come across some indescribable good fortune, which is why he was able to succeed.”

“Cultivation is a matter of defying the Heavens, so who cares if he opens 115 meridians! We all have secret augmentary magics that will enable us to fight him!”

Even as discussions raged in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, Meng Hao looked up. His cultivation base surged with the power of Immortal Ascension.

Immortal power filled him with a sense of incredible might, to a degree that it was impossible to even compare to what he was like before opening the Door of Immortality.

“I can still get stronger,” he thought. “115 Immortal meridians... is not my limit!” He gritted his teeth; his eyes were shot with blood, and seemed to be filled with insanity.

“Fifth Demon Sealing Hex, Inside Outside Hex!” He lifted his right hand, within which appeared a finger-nail sized rift. He quickly clenched his hand into a fist, after which rumbling sounds filled him, along with numerous tiny, illusory rifts.

Boundless Immortal qi was sucked into him, causing him to tremble, and his face to go pale. His body seemed to be filled with rifts; after all, he could barely force the usage of the Fifth Hex. This Hex... was a Daoist magic designed to be used at the peak of the Ancient Realm.

“OPEN UP!” he roared. Rumbling and cracking sounds filled him as majestic Immortal qi continuously flowed into him. Eventually, enough time passed for two incense sticks to burn. Meng Hao endured the intense pain the entire time, after which he coughed up a mouthful of blood and then began to chuckle.

As his laughter rang out, a 116th Immortal meridian solidified!

He had forced it to open and solidify!

The Immortal meridian was unstable, but even still, it was there. Meng Hao’s aura soared up, and... yet another Immortal dragon appeared outside of the Door of Immortality.

This dragon... was both illusory and real. It was occasionally blurry, and occasionally clear. As it soared about, the void around it seemed to both collapse and bulge, causing all observers to gasp.

# Chapter 978: An Immortal Flying Through the Sky!

"He still hasn't reached his true limit yet...?"

"116 meridians. Does that make him Chosen? I've been stuck in the Immortal Realm for years now. I may just be a false Immortal, but I opened 70 meridians. He... has nearly 50 more than me...."

"As he continues to grow, the Ninth Mountain and Sea most likely won't be his limit. He'll probably advance even further!" As everyone watched Meng Hao, various thoughts ran through their heads, some frustrated, some emotional, some grudging, some jealous.

Fang Wei's eyes were closed, and he refused to watch. As for the Chosen of the various other sects and clans, most of them were acting similarly. Only Li Ling'er continued to observe.

Meng Hao hovered in the starry sky, quietly probing his meridians.

116 Immortal meridians!

100 of them represented the limits of his own body. 8 were Immortal qi meridians arising from the bronze Soul Lamp.

2 had been gifted by outer forces, materializing power buried within him.

Another 2 had been formed from his own divine abilities and cultivation base, becoming meridians of Immortal magic!

The final 4 were different. They were meridians formed because of the Demon Sealers, and were not true Immortal meridians, but rather... Demon Sealer meridians!

This was his current limit. He hovered there outside of the Door of Immortality, looking at the 116 Immortal dragons swirling gracefully in the starry sky. He had never imagined that his opening the Door of Immortality would be accompanied by such splendidous glory.

"Preparation is the key to success...." he murmured. As he said the

words, he realized that upon opening the Door of Immortality, he had unleashed all of the accumulations of good fortune and destiny in his life.

He was like a flower that had bloomed at the perfect time.

"Dad, mom," he said, looking off in the direction of Planet South Heaven, "you're on Planet South Heaven, but can you see what I'm doing here...?"

"Your son hasn't lost any face for you. I'm right here... a blazing sun, the center of all attention."

Meng Hao could well imagine how his current actions were shaking all of the cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. That would be especially true of the true Immortal Chosen, who would be stabbed to the heart by the number of Immortal meridians he had opened.

However, he didn't care. His goal had never been to catch up to any other person. His only goal was to exceed himself.

"I think.... I can probably open one more meridian!" His eyes were bloodshot, but they shone with brilliant light as he stood there tall and straight beneath the Door of Immortality, like a sharp, unsheathed sword.

Almost as soon as his eyes began to shine, something happened in a sect on the Ninth Mountain.

Within that sect were countless buildings, divided into ten areas. Each area was filled with crowds of cultivators, all of them in the midst of practicing cultivation.

The entire sect seemed to form a gigantic city, which exerted suffocating pressure even from a distance. It was a sect that, from the look of it, had existed for ages.

All of the buildings seemed to exude the feeling of time, as if they had existed for years upon years. If you traced the origin of these buildings, you would find... that apparently, they were older than the era of Lord Ji or even Lord Li. They had existed for virtually as long as the Nine Mountains and Seas themselves.

This was none other than the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite!

This was the foremost of the Three Great Daoist Societies of the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

This was the only sect that could cause the Ji Clan to stand down, the most paramount sect, which existed on the Ninth Mountain itself.

In the middle of those ten areas of the sect was a huge public square paved with green stones. It emanated a primordial aura that spread out in all directions.

Currently, four old men sat cross-legged in the middle of that square. Shockingly, all of them radiated the power of the Dao Realm. Any one of these old men could completely shake the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea.

“This kid is connected by destiny to the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite,” said one of them, his voice ancient. “According to our Dao rules, if he can open 117 meridians, then we will unleash the power of the Daoist Rite and help him to create an Immortal Ancient Daoist meridian.”

The other three men nodded.

“Let’s just watch and see the extent of his good fortune. He currently has 116 meridians. Will he get that 117th meridian, and then ours, to make two more meridians...?”

“Legend has it that Kṣitigarbha of the Fourth Mountain and Sea opened 120 Immortal meridians!”

“If he opens one more, and then gets ours, that would put him at 118. It’s impossible to judge what his future will be like. Yet, it would be extremely difficult to exceed Kṣitigarbha. The kid has already reached his limit. Even if we help him by adding another, he most likely won’t be able to do so.”

“Let’s see what his destiny holds, and how much good fortune he has accumulated.... If his destiny is sufficient, it might not be impossible!”

At the same time that the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite was deciding what to do with Meng Hao, he hovered there outside of Planet East Victory, beneath the Door of Immortality, his eyes shining intensely. Veins of blood shot through his eyes, which radiated intense determination.

"I used four great Demon Sealing Hexes to form Immortal meridians. Well then, looking at all my other divine abilities and magical techniques, I wonder if I can do the same thing with One Thought Stellar Transformation?" Starlight began to shine in Meng Hao's left eye, but no matter what method he attempted, he couldn't get it to form into a meridian.

However, that didn't stop him from trying to do the same thing with all the other powerful divine abilities he had mastered. He gave it a shot with all of them but, regrettably, none of them allowed him to form Immortal meridians.

All fell short, even One Thought Stellar Transformation.

"There is still one more divine ability...." he thought, slowly raising his head.

"The Paragon Bridge! I can use the projection of the Paragon Bridge to form a Paragon Immortal meridian!" Without any further hesitation, Meng Hao unleashed the power of the Paragon Bridge. In the instant the power surged out, he coughed up a mouthful of blood. The fact that he used it repeatedly in such a short amount of time caused the backlash power to increase by multiple times.

During this time, the Immortal light began to fade, as if it had sensed that Meng Hao was unable to open up any new Immortal meridians.

Soon it was completely gone. The starry sky was pitch black, and the Door of Immortality began to slowly fade away and shut. No more Immortal qi emanated out, and it looked like it would disappear into the starry sky at any moment.

"Not enough destiny." The four old men in the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite sighed. Their Immortal Ancient Daoist meridian was not something that they would bestow lightly. They would only give it to someone who had opened 117 meridians; that was a Dao rule of the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite that had to be followed.

It was at this point that many audience members out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea let out long sighs. Meng Hao was completely inhuman,

and terrifying, but now that everything was over, people began to recover from all the shock.

“116 is more than enough!”

“A collection of Immortal meridians like that is enough to scare anyone.”

“What a pity. I was really hoping to see if he could actually open... huh? Wh-what is he doing?” Even in the midst of all the discussions, cries of shock suddenly rang out in various regions.

Gasps could also be heard as everyone looked over at Meng Hao. In the exact moment in which the Door of Immortality was about to close and fade away permanently, Meng Hao suddenly raised both hands into the air.

Simultaneously, the 116 Immortal dragons that soared around him let out roars that shook everything. The starry sky trembled as the 116 dragons shot toward Meng Hao.

Rumbling echoed out as they slammed into him and then disappeared. Meng Hao’s aura then began to explode up as the power of 116 Immortal meridians was unleashed.

“Paragon Bridge, appear!” Meng Hao’s eyes were bright red as he went all-out with every scrap of power he could muster. He threw his head back and roared. His body trembled, and thumping sounds could be heard. Patches of skin exploded, and a haze of blood and gore could be seen as the Paragon Bridge materialized inside of him.

At the same time that the Paragon Bridge appeared, the indistinct Door of Immortality paused, then suddenly rematerialized. Immortal light poured out, and strong Immortal qi surged toward Meng Hao.

Boundless Immortal qi poured into his body, causing the Paragon Bridge to turn into an Immortal meridian. Everyone who was watching was astonished, and the four old men in the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite watched very closely.

Massive rumbling filled the air as Meng Hao’s mangled body was

wracked by waves of intense pain. As the pain inundated him, he gritted his teeth and forced the Paragon Immortal meridian to rapidly solidify.

Ten percent. Twenty percent. Thirty percent...

Blood oozed out of Meng Hao's mouth, and his vision grew blurry. However, he clenched his jaw and forced his 116 Immortal meridians to explode with power.

Forty percent. Fifty percent. Sixty percent. Seventy percent....

"OPEN UP!" he roared. Shocking rumbling sounds could be heard as gradually, he reached eighty percent, then ninety percent.... Finally, the Immortal meridian reached one hundred percent completion!

Heaven and Earth shook, and countless onlookers were left in a state of shock. Many people who had been sitting there cross-legged suddenly rose to their feet, their eyes wide with intense astonishment.

Amidst the crashing roars, Immortal light swirled, and a 117th Immortal meridian formed inside of Meng Hao. At the same time, a 117th Immortal dragon appeared outside of the Door of Immortality, shocking to the extreme.

Furthermore, this most recent Immortal dragon emanated the aura of a Paragon. This was none other than a Paragon Immortal dragon!

Inside the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite, the four old men looked on with strange gleams in their eyes. After exchanging glances, they began to smile with anticipation.

"Unleash the power of the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite. Merge the wills of the Daoist Rite cultivators to call upon the Immortal Divinity of the ancient Daoist Rite...."

"Bestow the meridian!"

The four men immediately began to perform incantations. Intense rumbling could be heard as four streams of shocking qi shot out into the starry sky. At the same time, a primordial will erupted out from all of the structures in the sect.

Cracking sounds could be heard as the ground between the four men tore apart to form the character ‘mouth’ 口.

All of the cultivators in the Daoist Rite went into a trance as they heard voices speaking into their ears. They settled down cross-legged and began to chant Daoist scriptures, the sound of which echoed out in all directions.

The ground quaked as a gigantic square cauldron flew up into the sky. Inside of that cauldron was a scroll painting that was yellowed with age, as if it had existed for countless years. The painting depicted three people.

A woman, a middle-aged man, and an old man.

The woman was incredibly beautiful, with a smile like a flower. The middle-aged man wore a light smile, and had surging energy. The light in his eyes seemed to contain all living things. As for the old man, his bearing was lofty and dignified, like that of a transcendent being, and yet, he wore a frown. If you looked closely at his brow, you would be shocked to notice... the furrowed wrinkles formed the character ‘Immortal’ 仙!

If Meng Hao were present, his mind would definitely be reeling with shock. That was because... the woman in the painting... was none other than the white-robed Paragon from the Ruins of Immortality!

Gentle light radiated out of the painting, spreading out to fill the entire area. The sky above the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite transformed into an illusory world.

Within that world were countless life forms sitting cross-legged in meditation, listening to a sermon being given regarding the Dao, delivered by an old man who sat cross-legged at their fore.

That old man was the same old man depicted in the scroll painting. He nonchalantly waved his hand, causing an enormous Immortal 仙 character to appear.

It was virtually impossible to describe the shocking energy that emanated from this character, which seemed capable of suppressing all Heaven and Earth.

It glittered for a moment before suddenly shooting out into the starry

sky, creating a beam of glistening light as it sped toward Planet East  
Victory and Meng Hao!

# Chapter 979: An Eruption of Good Fortune!

The Immortal character flew out, piercing through the starry sky, transforming into a spectacularly stunning beam of light.

It looked like an Immortal flying through the sky. In the blink of an eye, it appeared outside of Planet East Victory, next to the Door of Immortality, where it once again materialized into an enormous Immortal character.

The character emanated pressure comparable to that of the Door of Immortality, causing it to tremble as if it were being provoked. Ripples began to spread out as the character trembled and moved toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's mind was spinning as he looked at the huge Immortal character, and his whole body shook. That character looked very familiar... it was just like the character he had seen unleashed by the old man in the visions he had experienced back in the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple on Planet South Heaven. 1

"The Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite...." he thought. He gaped in shock as the Immortal character approached him. It rapidly shrank until it was only a few centimeters tall, whereupon it fused into Meng Hao's forehead.

In that instant, scintillating light filled with a primordial, savage aura exploded from within Meng Hao. Right now, he didn't even need a scrap of Immortal qi from the Door of Immortality. The Immortal character immediately transformed of its own volition into an Immortal meridian, becoming Meng Hao's 118th meridian!

In the same moment, the Immortal meridian that had formed from the smoke of the bronze Soul Lamp began to glitter with a strange light, as if it were now reflecting the glory of this new Immortal meridian.

Rumbling echoed out from within Meng Hao as an 118th Immortal dragon appeared outside of the Door of Immortality, where it roared and swirled through the starry sky. This dragon was completely golden, and

seemed to embody everything Immortal. Its roars shook the hearts of everyone who could hear.

“That’s... that’s....”

“Am I seeing things? Was that actually an Immortal character that just fused with Fang Hao?”

“Where did that Immortal character come from?” The Ninth Mountain and Sea was abuzz with shock, and all onlookers were astonished. Only the Dao Realm Patriarchs from the various sects and clans looked with glittering eyes toward the Ninth Mountain.

Obviously, they weren’t looking toward the Ji Clan, but rather, the other force that was qualified to occupy the Ninth Mountain... one of the Three Great Daoist Societies, the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite!

Meng Hao also looked up in the direction of the Ninth Mountain. Although his cultivation base wasn’t strong enough to allow him to see it, he could still sense it. He knew that the Immortal character did not originate from Planet South Heaven.

He also knew that outside of Planet South Heaven in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, there was another Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple, one that was not in ruins. It was in fact one of the Three Great Daoist Societies!

Meng Hao didn’t say anything, but he clasped hands and bowed deeply.

It was a bow full of gratitude. He knew that the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite had bestowed him with good fortune by opening another Immortal meridian for him. Giving him an Immortal meridian was a type of good fortune that was no simple task. Even with their deep reserves, they had surely paid a heavy price for what they had just done.

“Many thanks!” he said softly. His 118 Immortal meridians caused everything to shake, and Meng Hao knew... that everything was now over.

118 Immortal meridians was a level that Meng Hao was satisfied with. Now, he wanted to know... after the Door of Immortality closed, exactly how powerful he would be!

However, there was something Meng Hao wasn't aware of. Floating in the starry sky outside of Planet East Victory was someone who was feeling very torn at the moment. It was none other than the Fang Clan's Dao Realm expert, the Earth Patriarch.

He hovered cross-legged, acting as Dharma Protector for Meng Hao, and currently, his eyes were bright red, filled with a look that encompassed both struggle and hesitation.

"Damn you, Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite! What the hell do you people think you're doing, huh?

"So you're blessing the qilin son of the Fang Clan with some good fortune, not out of the kindness of your heart, but to undermine our clan? You think blessing him with some good fortune will fill him with enough gratitude to want to become your disciple?

"Dammit, that's a good thing, but... but if you let everyone in the Ninth Mountain and Sea know, it will definitely cast the Fang Clan in a very bad light! What, you think we don't have our own Immortal meridians to hand out?" The Patriarch was incensed. It was like there were two rich people, one of whom had a son. Suddenly, another rich person came along and arranged for his own daughter to marry the son, and then loudly announced that he was fulfilling a responsibility of which the young man's father was incapable.

To a member of the Elder generation of the clan, something like this was like a slap to the face. He was now in a complete rage.

"Fudge! Stinking Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite! Our Fang Clan has existed for generations, we can do the same thing!" Enduring the pain of it, the Earth Patriarch gritted his teeth and performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, then pointed down toward Planet East Victory.

That gesture caused Essence power to erupt out. Planet East Victory quaked violently, and even stopped rotating momentarily. At the same time, a drop of blood shot out from the forehead of all of the members of the Fang Clan.

That included the Grand Elder, Fang Xiushan and even Fang Wei. They

could exercise absolutely no control over the drop of blood that came out of them.

“NO!” cried Fang Wei. His eyes were wide, and his expression was one of fury. Considering the level of his cultivation base, though, how could he possibly resist? He could only watch as the drop of blood emerged and then flew away!

“Bloodline Dragon!” the Fang Clan Earth Patriarch roared. All of the drops of blood flew into the air, one for each and every member of the Fang Clan.

There were no exceptions. All of the drops of blood merged together in midair to form a Blood Dragon, which roared as it shot through the air. A drop of blood even emerged from the Earth Patriarch’s forehead, and when it merged into the blood dragon, the dragon burst into flames, causing all of the blood from the Fang Clan to be refined and tempered to the ultimate degree.

After that, the Fang Clan Patriarch gritted his teeth and then pointed toward the Fang Clan again. The Fang Clan’s Dao bell materialized and tolled loudly. At the same time, an ancient bottle flew out from inside the bell, within which were three drops of blood, one of which flew out into the air.

It was a single, tiny drop, but it caused Heaven and Earth to fill with flashing colors. A huge wind kicked up, and blood-red light shone onto the faces of all observing cultivators.

“That’s soul blood from the first generation Patriarch of the Fang Clan!”

“Crazy! The Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite pissed off Fang Shoudao so much that he actually pulled out a signature treasure of the Fang Clan! Everybody says that Fang Shoudao has a short temper and is easily provoked. Looks like it’s true!” 2

“Those three drops of soul blood must have been left behind after the Fang Clan’s first generation Patriarch passed away into meditation. Even Lord Ji would covet that!” The Dao Realm Patriarch from the various sects and clans all looked on with gaping mouths.

Deep beneath the surface of the Fang Clan, the six Patriarchs' minds were spinning.

"W-what... w-what is Eldest Brother doing?!"

The Fang Clan's Earth Patriarch had a vicious look on his face. After a moment of hesitation, he gritted his teeth and then waved his hand through the air. Immediately, the first generation Patriarch's drop of soul blood shot toward the Bloodline Dragon, and then merged into it.

A boom could be heard as the dragon began to seethe again, and then rapidly shrink down to form a blood-colored character!

Fang 方 !!

This single character emanated a shocking sensation of bloodline power, including that of reincarnation. The power of four lives of reincarnation that pulsed in the blood of the Fang Clan now shook the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea.

The Fang character glittered and pulsed with shocking power as it shot toward Meng Hao, who stared with wide eyes at what was happening, but wasn't completely dazed. He could sense the bloodline aura coming from the character, and it set his own blood a-boil. A sensation of mutual attraction suddenly caused his heart and mind to tremble fiercely.

"What's going on?" he thought. "The Fang Clan is actually helping me?" Meng Hao's eyes were wide as he watched the blood-colored Fang character bear down on him and then merge into his forehead.

Rumbling immediately filled his body, and his blood seemed to grow stronger than ever. At the same time, the Fang character caused a Bloodline Dragon to form inside of him.

A 119th Immortal meridian formed, stimulated by the soul blood of the first generation Patriarch, with the blood of all members of the Fang Clan as its foundation. Therefore, it did not need any Immortal power from the Door of Immortality.

At the same time, a 119th Immortal dragon appeared next to the Door of Immortality. It emanated the aura of the Fang Clan bloodline, and caused

everything in the area to shake violently.

Meng Hao could sense his cultivation base growing more powerful, and he could sense his Fang Clan bloodline become even stronger. Although he was not able to test it right now, he was sure that his Bloodline Gatebeam would no longer be 30,000 meters, but even more terrifyingly powerful.

Apparently, this was the power of Ancestral Awakening!

Next, the voice of the Fang Clan's Earth Patriarch echoed out through the starry sky into Meng Hao's ears, causing him to gape.

"Alright Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite, if you people are so powerful, then bestow another Immortal meridian to my clan's qilin son! If you do, the Fang Clan will match you!"

"Come on! We'll match you one meridian for another!" As soon as the Earth Patriarch's voice rang out, the Patriarchs of the various sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea all quieted down. The four old men in the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite snorted coldly, but didn't dare to respond.

They... had no more meridians to send.

The Fang Clan Earth Patriarch looked quite proud. Although it hurt him inwardly, and although it seemed like he was acting impulsively, anyone who reached his cultivation level would be able to control their own thoughts. Seeing that there was no response from the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite, he frowned.

"Not gonna send another one?" he thought. "Well, it's too bad that we couldn't swindle another meridian out of them. In any case, this kid has reached this point all on his own, plus he doesn't feel much loyalty to the clan. Therefore, it was necessary to give him that drop of soul blood."

When Meng Hao heard the words spoken by the Fang Clan Earth Patriarch, his expression was a bit strange. He looked at the 119th Immortal dragon, then back down at Planet East Victory. Although it wouldn't be correct to say that his feelings of detachment had completely

dissipated, at least he didn't feel as much of an outsider as before.

"119 meridians," he thought, looking back at the Door of Immortality. It was at this point that a new voice suddenly whispered in his ear, an ancient, archaic voice.

"Do you... still remember me?

"My name is... Choumen Tai!"

When Meng Hao heard those two sentences, and that name, his heart seized. He suddenly jerked his head to look out into the stars. What he was looking for seemed to be outside of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Far away on another planet, a middle-aged man sat cross-legged. His eyes slowly opened, and he smiled.

"I didn't perish.... My clone fell onto Planet South Heaven years ago, and left you with Immortal Shows the Way. I told you that when you reached Immortal Ascension, you could use its power to cause a starry sky to descend.

"Today, I'll give you... a bit of the starry sky of Pāramitā's world to form an Immortal meridian, and help you to future glory....

"Remember, come to Planet Tiger Cage in the Seventh Mountain. I left a little gift for you there.

"There's someone I want to resurrect and... I hope you can help me out with that in the future.... Therefore, I'm going to help you now."

RUMBLE!

Meng Hao's mind spun as he recalled Choumen Tai, the Immortal's corpse that had fallen from the sky way back when he was a mere Qi Condensation cultivator! 3

\*

1. Meng Hao's visions in the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple were in chapters 807 and 819.

2. Fang Shoudao's name in Chinese is 方守道 fāng shǒu dào. Shou means "protect" or "guard." Dao is "the Dao," or also "path" or "way".
3. Please note that in my original translation of what Choumen Tai said, I misinterpreted some of his explanation of Immortal Shows the Way, but have since gone back and fixed that section. The part where he introduces himself and explains Immortal Shows the Way is in [chapter 301](#). He made a brief cameo in [chapter 555](#), when he woke up in the Rebirth Cave. Later, he showed up when Meng Hao went to the Rebirth Cave in [chapter 689](#) and then was kicked off of the planet by Shui Dongliu in [chapter 692](#). His name was brought up in numerous other chapters, usually when Meng Hao reflected on the things he said.

# Chapter 980: Foster Father Sends a Meridian!

The ancient voice echoed in Meng Hao's mind like thunder. The sound eventually turned into a series of explosive reverberations that stirred Meng Hao's memories.

He saw scenes from events on Planet South Heaven. He saw that moment in which he stood atop the Tower of Tang in the State of Zhao, and looked upon foreign battlefield within the clouds. On the battlefield was an enormous coffin, next to which was a corpse, who suddenly opened its eyes.

Then the corpse plummeted down to the earth. Later, after his trial by fire in the Violet Fate Sect, he actually entered into the corpse. All of these images played out in Meng Hao's mind.

In the end, the rumbling in his mind transformed into three characters, which formed a name!

"Choumen Tai!" Meng Hao looked up, and his heart trembled violently as a beam of light flew towards him from outside of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Shockingly, it came from the Seventh Mountain!

It swept across the Seventh Mountain, passed through the Eighth Mountain, then flew with indescribable speed past countless shocked cultivators to appear in the Ninth Mountain!

Presently, the starry sky above the Ninth Mountain and Sea began to undulate. The Dao Realm Patriarchs from the various sects and clans hovered in midair, watching the beam of light with unprecedented seriousness.

In the Ji Clan on the Ninth Mountain, an eye appeared that seemed capable of gazing upon the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea, and it stared at the incoming beam of light.

The light shot like a meteor directly toward Planet East Victory and Meng Hao!

The stars shook, and all living beings were astonished!

“The cultivation base of a Dao Lord. At minimum, that’s a 4 Essences cultivation base!”

“Only a cultivation base like that, something higher than a 3 Essences Dao Lord, would be able to shake Heaven and Earth in such a fashion! It’s coming from the Seventh Mountain!”

“There are only a few Dao Lords in all the Nine Mountains and Seas.... Who is this person!? That aura is completely unfamiliar!” The Dao Realm Patriarchs of the Ninth Mountain and Sea looked on with wide eyes.

The beam of light caused rumbling sounds as it split the sky, appearing directly in front of Meng Hao and then slamming into his chest.

Instantly, it fused into his body!

Massive rumbling filled him, and he stretched his arms out wide. He threw his head back and roared, and his hair whipped about wildly. The sound of the roar echoed out uncontrollably as qi filled his body, as if the qi wanted to escape through his throat.

That beam of light seemed to have been materialized from the starry sky of some tiny world. It was a starry sky meridian!

It rapidly fused with Meng Hao, transforming into an Immortal meridian. It was like a heavenly body, complete with boundless starlight that caused Meng Hao’s aura to once again experience a breakthrough. It climbed rapidly to an extent that even many Ancient Realm experts with one Soul Lamp extinguished were alarmed.

When the beam of light faded away completely, a massive tremor ran through Meng Hao, and indescribable pain filled him. The starry sky meridian solidified rapidly, and was then visible to the naked eye.

It forced its way open with virtually no resistance. The Door of Immortality trembled, and Immortal qi poured out to assist. After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, Meng Hao opened his eyes, and shocking rumbling sounds could be heard.

120 meridians had appeared!

In the moment that the meridian appeared, another Immortal dragon arose, swirling through the air.

The 120th Immortal dragon was a Starry Sky Dragon. The dragon's body appeared to have been formed from starlight, and when it appeared, it seemed capable of merging into the starry sky at any time. Shocking pressure emanated out as it roared along with the other dragons.

All of Planet East Victory was shaken, as was the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Each and every person... was completely focused on Meng Hao!

"Such destiny... is completely unheard of...."

"That Dao Lord from outside this Mountain and Sea bestowed him with a starry sky meridian. The level of good fortune this kid has is something I've only seen one or two other people possess!"

"I thought 100 meridians was his limit, and then he opened 108. At that point, I thought he was really done, but then he opened 117!"

"I figured that he couldn't possibly exceed 117, but then his destiny erupted and the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite AND the Fang Clan both gave him a meridian, as well as a Paragon from outside this Mountain and Sea!"

The Patriarchs of the various clans didn't say anything, but it was impossible for them to keep their hearts calm. They could never have possibly imagined that a member of the Junior generation opening Immortal meridians would cause them to be so shocked.

The Ji Clan on the Ninth Mountain also maintained silence. The eye that could gaze upon the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea vanished as if it had never appeared.

The Chosen watched the scene with blank expressions. When they saw Meng Hao successfully open 120 meridians, profound sensations of powerlessness filled them.

The distance between them and Meng Hao, seemed... to only grow

greater and greater.

Meng Hao's parents stood excitedly in the Tower of Tang on Planet South Heaven. Their eyes shone with pride as they looked at the illusory image of Meng Hao opening his Immortal meridians on Planet East Victory.

"Hao'er...." Meng Li whispered. She was elated to see her son rising to prominence, and her eyes shone with a gentle warmth.

Next to her stood Fang Xiufeng, whose facial expression was the same as ever, but whose heart was bursting with pride. He could sense that one reason why Meng Hao was doing this was for their sake.

Meng Hao wanted to prove to everyone in the Fang Clan that it didn't matter if it was before or now, he was the number one Chosen in clan, and always would be. As for his father and mother, it didn't matter that they were far away on Planet South Heaven, he wanted to make sure they still enjoyed the clan's respect.

120 Immortal meridians completely shook the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

It was at this moment that, in the Fourth Mountain and Sea, deep within the mists in the mysterious underworld, that enormous statue suddenly opened its eyes.

Instantly, all of the underworld went silent; time suddenly seemed to stop in the entire Fourth Mountain and Sea, which went completely quiet.

The innumerable souls being reborn in the Yellow Springs and the River of Reincarnation all stopped moving.

It was as if only that statue existed in the Fourth Mountain and Sea. A profound gleam appeared in its eyes as it stared off in the direction of the Ninth Mountain. After a long moment passed, the statue lifted its right hand and performed an incantation gesture that appeared to be a type of augury. After a long moment, a sigh could be heard.

"I can't see his future....

"From the moment my Dao was realized until now, this is the third

person whose future I have been unable to see.... However, I AM able to see his past....

"I'll sow some positive destiny. After all, he and I will meet eventually." After murmuring these words, the statue extended its right hand, causing a Dharmic decree to appear.

This Dharmic decree emanated a supreme will; although it seemed illusory, this was actually the highest level of Dharmic decree that could be issued in the Fourth Mountain and Sea.

Visible on the Dharmic decree was a string of text, written in large characters!

"Among the souls being reincarnated from the Ninth Mountain and Sea is a woman surnamed Xu. Send 10,000 ghosts to escort her. Give her first-rate good fortune, and a life of peace and safety!"

The Dharmic decree glowed with boundless light, then gradually faded away. The statue closed its eyes, and in that instant, the Fourth Mountain and Sea returned to normal.

That statue... was none other than the Lord of the Fourth Mountain and Sea, Kṣitigarbha!

In the year that Meng Hao had taken that boat trip through the starry sky with that mysterious old man, even he had taken Kṣitigarbha... very seriously!

Meng Hao could never have imagined that in the moment that he reached true Immortal Ascension, he would attract such a commotion. Apparently, his opening of the Door of Immortality was like a tipping point. All of the destiny he had built up in his life merged together to form into a golden opportunity, as if they had been waiting for this moment.

Choumen Tai. The Resurrection Lily. Patriarch Blood Demon. The Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite. Each and every one exploded onto the scene when Meng Hao formed his Immortal meridians.

Meng Hao hovered outside the Door of Immortality, and his eyes flickered with brilliant light. He could sense the boundless power of his

120 Immortal meridians. He saw the 120 Immortal dragons roaring, and could sense his own strength.

He slowly lowered his head and then clasped hands and bowed toward the starry sky.

That bow was a bow of thanks to everyone who had assisted him, an expression of appreciation for all the destiny and good fortune he had encountered.

All of the cultivators in the Ninth Mountain and Sea looked on silently as Meng Hao bowed. None of them could possibly have imagined that Meng Hao's opening of the Door of Immortality would end in this way.

As everyone looked on, it appeared... as if the event was now ending!

The Door of Immortality once again began to grow blurry, the Immortal light began to fade away, and the Immortal qi began to dissipate.

However, many people had the feeling deep inside, that Meng Hao... was still going to open more Immortal meridians.

Time passed. As the Door of Immortality seemed to be on the verge of fading away completely, that feeling also began to vanish. Finally, people began to sigh.

"It's finally... finished...."

"120 meridians is something completely unheard of...."

"In my entire long life... this is the most powerful true Immortal destiny I've ever seen!"

On Planet East Victory, Fang Wei's jaw was tightly clenched. Suddenly, rumbling sounds could be heard as he shot up into the air. All of the members of the Fang Clan looked on in shock as he rose up into the sky.

"Fang Hao, it's time for us to fight!" Fang Wei's voice was hoarse as it echoed out in all directions. His cultivation base surged to life. He had no choice but to fight. It didn't matter how powerful Meng Hao had become, he would still fight. He would fight in front of all eyes, including all onlookers in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. He would defeat Meng Hao in

front of all of them. He would kill him!

That was the only way for him to step out from behind Meng Hao's shadow.

In that same moment, the faces of all of the other true Immortal Chosen flickered with the desire to do battle. They were thinking the same thing as Fang Wei; whether they won or lost, they had to fight. If they lost their will to fight, then they would never again have the opportunity to stand on equal ground with Meng Hao.

Even as their desire to do battle rose up, the Patriarchs of the various sects to which those Chosen belonged silently waved their hands, causing numerous teleportation portals to appear.

All the Chosen had to do was step into those portals, and they would be able to go to Planet East Victory.

However, even as they clenched their jaws and prepared to enter the teleportation portals, even as Fang Wei's voice echoed out into the starry sky, even as the Door of Immortality was about to vanish completely....

Suddenly, a sigh could be heard echoing out among the stars. It filled the sky above Planet East Victory, and entered Meng Hao's ears, whereupon he suddenly trembled and looked up.

"Hey little brother, I'm going to take father's place to give you a meridian!" The voice was soft and ancient. And when it echoed out, an aura exploded up from the Ji Clan on the Ninth Mountain. Apparently, someone there knew where that voice came from, and it left them completely shocked.

# Chapter 981: Illusory Soul Lamps!

The voice came from... the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect!!

It was a mysterious location in the starry sky of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, a place that opened at a set interval of years. It was not part of the Ruins of Immortality, nor as mysterious as those ruins, but due to other historical events, had become a taboo area within the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Whenever it did open up, Chosen from the various planets would travel to the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect, a place which was both familiar and strange to everyone.

It was a location originally created by Lord Li, and was where the Ji and Fang Clans had resided and flourished. It had existed for ages, during which time the so-called sects of modern times were mere denominations of the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect.

That was true of both the modern day Holy Lands as well as the Three Churches and Six Sects. Only the Three Great Daoist Societies were not part of the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect at that time.

According to the legends, a fierce creature existed there who frightened even Lord Ji, something named Night!

The stories said that Night could control the power of time and space, and could send people into ancient times in a dreamlike state....

Supposedly, there was also a person in the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect who forevermore lived on top of a mountain peak. Sometimes he would laugh, at other times he would cry, and occasionally, he would just stand there silently....

Now, this voice echoed out from the very same Ancient Demon Immortal Sect, and as soon as Meng Hao heard it, he recognized that voice. It was... Ke Jiusi!!

Because he had been a rash and impulsive person, because he had been arrogant and domineering, because he had instigated catastrophe after

catastrophe, his father Ke Yunhai changed his name to Jiusi, to remind his son that instead of considering a matter three times before taking any action, he should consider it nine times! 1

Meng Hao began to tremble. He had never imagined that in the middle of opening his Immortal meridians, after all of his destiny had erupted, that his destiny from the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect... would also erupt.

Ke Jiusi. It was an unforgettable name. Even more unforgettable was... Ke Yunhai.

He was Meng Hao's foster father, someone who caused Meng Hao to finally experience fatherly love. It was a memory that he would be unable to forget for all eternity, no matter what.

Whenever he thought about Ke Yunhai, Meng Hao's eyes turned red, and he couldn't stop the tears from welling up. He missed Ke Yunhai. He missed all the things about the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect, and he especially missed the man whose fatherly love was like a mountain.

"Hey little brother, I'm going to take father's place to give you a meridian...." Meng Hao had long known that because of the the approval he had earned from Ke Yunhai... Ke Jiusi was now effectively his older brother.

Meng Hao looked thoughtfully out into the starry sky. The words he had just heard seemed to take him back in time.

Out in the starry sky in the vicinity of the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect, was a place covered over by mists. Deep within that mist were endless ruins... ruins in which there was no Heaven and Earth, only darkness.

There, you could just barely see... a mountain peak, atop which stood a figure in a white robe. The robes swayed, and the man seemed as quiet as eternity.

Also on top of that mountain peak was a coffin....

That white-robed man was none other than Ke Jiusi, who stood there quietly, a slight smile on his face. He looked ancient, filled with both

memories and emotional sighs.

"Little brother," he murmured, "father is gone, but... I'm here to look after you." Even as he spoke, he waved his right hand, then pointed off into the distance. Immediately, the ruins of the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect began to quake, and for a moment, it seemed as if slumbering Night was also shivering.

At the same time, time seemed to suddenly pass by in front of Ke Jiusi. It went in reverse, ten years, a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand... tens of thousands....

The countless buildings and innumerable corpses were slowly transforming. The collapsed ruins were gradually restored, and the dead people rose to their feet, once again in possession of flesh and blood bodies. The vanished Heaven and Earth were restored to perfect clarity.

The sound of chatting and laughter could be heard, and rainbows could be seen in the sky. Someone was giving a sermon about the Dao, and roaring Immortal beasts could be seen on all of the mountain peaks. There was a Flying Rain-Dragon, like a sovereign of the skies, whistling through the air.

Everything... was restored. The mountain that Ke Jiusi stood on, and even Ke Yunhai's Immortal's cave, were all restored to glorious splendor. Brilliant light shone up into the sky, and massive pressure weighed down on everything.

A rumbling sound could be heard as the door of Ke Yunhai's Immortal's cave slowly swung open. A middle-aged man stepped out, his expression serious but not angry. It was none other than... Ke Yunhai!

His aura radiated out brightly, and not the slightest bit of Death aura could be sensed on him. He had the aura of a Paragon, the type that, if it exploded out, could cow all Heaven and Earth.

Ke Yunhai walked out, then climbed up to the peak of the mountain to stand in the same position as Ke Jiusi. The two of them overlapped with each other....

It was impossible to say exactly what year it was, or what month, or what day, that Ke Yunhai stood on top of that mountain peak, superimposed with his son, to pass through years of time.

After a long moment, Ke Yunhai slowly extended his hand, and his Soul Lamp flew out. It had the body of a dragon and the wick of a phoenix, and when it landed on his palm, Ke Yunhai looked at the soul fire for a long moment, and then smiled. Then he waved his hand, and a dragon flew out, which instantly emanated a powerful Demonic sensation. Clouds and mist roiled as it roared a shocking roar that caused everything to shake.

“Demon Immortal Dragon,” Ke Yunhai said coolly.

In the same moment that Ke Yunhai spoke the words, Ke Jiusi also murmured the same thing.

“Demon Immortal Dragon.”

His motion was the same as Ke Yuhai’s as he waved his hand. The only difference was that there was no Dragon-Phoenix Soul Lamp in his hand.

“This dragon embodies the fate of the Demon Immortal Sect. It contains some of the Essence of the Ninth Mountain, and is perfectly suitable for opening an Immortal meridian.” Ke Yunhai said. He pointed out with his finger, and the Demon Immortal Dragon shot up into the clouds, vanishing in the blink of an eye.

When the dragon vanished, Ke Yunhai’s image slowly began to fade. Soon, only Ke Jiusi remained behind. During the course of the following few breaths of the time, the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect passed back through many years of time to the modern age. It once again became ruins, filled with corpses.

A sigh could be heard echoing across the lands as Night’s eyes opened.

Atop the mountain peak, Ke Jiusi’s eyes had filled with tears.

“Dad... I miss you....” he murmured. After a long moment, he looked up into the dark sky and pointed his finger. The clouds up above churned, then opened up to reveal an ancient dragon flying down.

It was... that same Demon Immortal Dragon.

Moments ago, that dragon did not even exist. It was the power of Night that caused it to materialize from ancient times.

"Go...." murmured Ke Jiusi. "Little brother, I'm standing in for father to give you this gift." He waved his hand, causing the Demon Immortal Dragon to roar, and then shoot through the clouds off into the distance.

As it sped off, Ke Jiusi's figure gradually began to darken, and the entire Ancient Demon Immortal Sect once again began to sink quietly into the mists....

The Demon Immortal Dragon ripped through the starry sky, and soon appeared in front of Meng Hao, outside Planet East Victory.

Meng Hao was trembling as he looked at it; he could clearly sense Ke Yunhai's aura upon it.

"Foster father...." he murmured, his heart filled with grief. Rumbling sounds echoed out as the Demon Immortal Dragon fused directly into Meng Hao. He didn't do anything to resist. He allowed it to enter him and immediately open up a murky Immortal meridian.

It was... the 121st meridian!

It was... bestowed upon him by Ke Yunhai, and presented by Ke Jiusi.

BOOOOMMMMM!

Meng Hao's aura exploded up wildly, far exceeding its previous level. Furthermore, it was even possible to see the vague images of lamps behind him!!

Suddenly, the Door of Immortality, which had been on the verge of fading away, seemed to be wrenched open by some massive, invisible hand. Immortal light poured out, and Immortal qi once again exploded forth, filling Meng Hao, pouring into his 121st Immortal meridian, causing it to rapidly solidify.

Soon, the Immortal meridian was completely formed, and another Immortal dragon soared past the Door of Immortality.

The 121st Immortal dragon brimmed with a Demonic aura that seemed to pass through time itself. It was impossible for anyone to see exactly what color the dragon was, but it was possible for them to tell that it was extremely ancient, as if it had existed for countless ages.

In the same moment that this new Immortal dragon appeared, Zhixiang sat in the modern Demon Immortal Sect. The entire sect began to shake violently, and the offerings within the sect began to vibrate as if they had formed a resonance with something.

Meng Hao's aura rose up rapidly, and all cultivators who could see the illusory lamps behind Meng Hao were shocked and felt their minds reeling. Although they had been astonished by Meng Hao multiple times, they couldn't prevent themselves from once again being completely moved.

"Are those... Soul Lamps!?"

"Fang Hao is powerful to an incomprehensible degree! He... he actually caused illusory Soul Lamps to appear!!"

"It might just be illusory, but those are definitely Soul Lamps!"

Conversations buzzed through various regions of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

In the Kunlun Society, Chu Yuyan had been staring at Meng Hao this whole time, watching as he opened one Immortal meridian after another. Her face was flushed, and her eyes shone with a bright light.

Meng Hao had long since become indelibly imprinted onto her heart.

Pill Demon stood off to the side, smiling as all of the Kunlun Society looked at the illusory image, gasping. He shook his head, and his smile was filled with kindness.

"To be surpassed by one's own disciple... I guess it counts as a joyful occasion too," he thought.

At the same time, Planet East Victory was in a huge commotion. The members of the Fang Clan watched the scene with wide eyes. Fang

Xiushan staggered backward several paces. From the moment Meng Hao's Immortal Tribulation had begun, he had been shocked over and over to the point where he was on the verge of collapse.

"Impossible. Simply impossible...." He almost couldn't believe that he was looking at the dim lamps behind Meng Hao.

Fang Wei hovered in midair. Although he didn't say anything, his body was trembling, and his determination to fight Meng Hao was rapidly waning.

The Grand Elder was as shocked as a wooden chicken, and his mind was reeling.

"I really was... mistaken." It was at this point that he finally gave voice to the feeling that he had been suppressing in his heart for so long.

\*

1. As a reminder, Ke Jiusi's name is a play on a Chinese expression which says "think three times before you act." The "Jiusi" could replace the first two characters of that expression to say "think nine times before you act".

# Chapter 982: Xu Qing's Good Fortune!

This was... the 121st meridian!

In the vast, boundless Heavens of the Nine Mountains and Seas, there had never before existed someone who opened 121 meridians, not even Kṣitigarbha with his 120!

What Meng Hao had accomplished was something that was completely without precedent!

He hovered there in midair, his energy soaring, his 121 Immortal meridians rotating madly. It was as if 121 Immortal dragons were roaring inside his body.

He slowly clenched his hands into fists, and felt the power coursing through him, and the boundless energy of his cultivation base. What he sensed... was a power unlike anything he had ever experienced before.

This breakthrough exceeded any other acquisition of good fortune that he had ever experienced.

This explosive rise of power could not be matched by any other destiny he had encountered.

It was a sloughing off of the mortal body, it was an exchange of the ordinary for the extraordinary, it was... a complete transformation of his entire life!

The Ninth Mountain and Sea was shaken, as were the four planets. Boundless ripples spread out into the starry sky. There was a legend that, when corroborating one's own Dao, upon true Immortal ascension, the entire mountain and sea would shake. And now, Meng Hao was showing everyone... that this legend was true!

As the rumbling echoed out, Kṣitigarbha sat silently on the Fourth Mountain.

"Immortal meridians...." he murmured. "From the time the great Nine Mountains and Seas were created until now, the great circle has always been 123 meridians. No one has ever reached that level. I wonder if he will

be able to?" After a long moment of silence, Kṣitigarbha raised his hand and issued another Dharmic decree.

This Dharmic decree consisted of only one sentence!

"I will take Xu Qing as my 49th apprentice!"

That one sentence was something that could change a person's entire life! Xu Qing, who was already in the middle of reincarnation, was now certain to experience incredible splendor when she was born again, to experience the pinnacle of honor.

"That's my big bro!" roared Fatty, grabbing onto the person who stood next to him in the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum.

"You see that? He's Meng Hao, my big bro! Fudge! From now on, who will possibly bully me!? If anyone dares to try to steal any of my beloved concubines, I'll have my big bro come and fight him to the death!

"Dammit! I had more than a hundred beloved concubines, but now... I only have three left!!" Fatty's angry voice echoed out in all directions.

Wang Youcai was in Moonset Lake, his eyes closed. Of course, his eyes had been blinded, and he could only gaze at eternal darkness. However, everyone in Moonset Lake looked at him with fear and dread.

A vicious person like him was someone that nobody had any desire to provoke.

He had no eyes, but now, there was a young woman sitting next to him. Her expression was gentle as she described everything that was happening with Meng Hao and his Immortal meridians to him.

Wang Youcai said nothing the entire time. However, his mouth turned up into the faintest of smiles.

"Meng Hao, I won't let you leave me behind...."

Chen Fan was in the Solitary Sword Pavilion, one of the Three Churches and Six Sects. Their reserves were profound, but could not match up to the Five Great Holy Lands. Chen Fan was not well known in the sect, and in fact, didn't even have any friends. Throughout the years, nobody had really

paid much attention to him. He stuck to himself to practice his sword arts, and as of this moment, was sitting by himself on a mountainside. He held an alcohol flagon in his hand, from which he took a drink. He looked up into the sky above the sect, at the huge screen which had been set up, and Meng Hao's image upon it. He raised the alcohol flagon up into the air. 1

"Bottoms up, Junior Brother!"

People were getting excited. Some wished Meng Hao well, some were envious. Some had feelings that went beyond envy. All sorts of thoughts were going through the minds of the people in the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Meng Hao hovered in the starry sky, his eyes gleaming with a bright light of... ambition!

Before, he hadn't been happy with only 108 meridians. Therefore, he had opened 117. Originally, he thought that was his limit, but then events unfolded, and he understood the profound result of verifying his own Dao.

At the moment, it wasn't that he was unsatisfied with 121 meridians. However, deep in his heart, he thirsted for more.

"I can still open more!" A brilliant gleam flickered in his eyes, and his Immortal meridians thrummed. He sent divine sense into his body, whereupon he found... the first bit of good fortune that he had acquired... when he first stepped onto the path of cultivation.

It wasn't the ancient mirror, but rather... the good fortune he had wrested away from Wang Tengfei, the legacy of the Flying Rain-Dragon!

Flying Rain-Dragons were the sovereigns of the sky, and as Meng Hao had made his successive breakthroughs in cultivation, the Flying Rain-Dragon's legacy had fused deep into his flesh and blood, even into his soul.

He had always had a hunch that the Flying Rain-Dragon was by no means weak, and was in fact incredibly powerful!

When he was in the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect, he saw a Flying Rain-Dragon that had been subjugated by cultivators and turned into the

guardian of one of their mountain peaks. However, he had always had the feeling that his Flying Rain-Dragon... should be even stronger than that! 2

The reason for that feeling was the unforgettable experience of the time when he had just acquired the legacy of the Flying Rain-Dragon, and it was attacked violently by the copper mirror. In all the years since then, he had never seen the copper mirror react so wildly. 3

Meng Hao knew the parrot well, and knew that its origin was extremely mysterious. Of course, that only caused him... to have more faith in the Flying Rain-Dragon's power.

"Perhaps my cultivation base isn't strong enough to unravel this mystery now. However... the legacy of the Flying Rain-Dragon was able to fuse into my Dao Pillars and afterwards, my Core. It even merged it into my Nascent Souls.... In that case, why wouldn't it be able to... turn into an Immortal meridian!" 4

"Follow me into the Immortal Realm, and beyond!" Meng Hao's eyes shone with intense light as rumbling sounds emanated out. His Immortal meridians exploded with power, and his divine sense, which was vastly more powerful than it had been before, didn't expand out, but rather, swept about inside of him to arouse the legacy of the Flying Rain-Dragon!

After a moment, it found a mote of light inside of him, quite inconspicuous, a dot of brightness inside of his Nascent Divinity.

If you looked closely at that mote of light, you would see an incredibly minuscule Flying Rain-Dragon.

"Flying Rain-Dragon Immortal meridian, OPEN!" cried Meng Hao. His cultivation base roared as he poured power into the mote of light. In the blink of an eye, the light grew blinding, and exploded outward. Endless rumbling filled Meng Hao. The Immortal qi from the Door of Immortality poured madly into him and then into the mote of light.

Time passed as more and more boundless Immortal qi merged into the mote of light. The Flying Rain-Dragon inside of him gradually grew larger until finally, the dragon opened its eyes, and they shone with a brilliant glow.

That brilliant glow contained profound dignity and haughtiness. It despised everything on the land below, and domineered over everything in the sky. It had no cares or worries, and thirsted for freedom and independence.

That... was Meng Hao's Dao!

Meng Hao's heart trembled. He had never imagined that his own Dao would be so similar to the Flying Rain-Dragon's nature.

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLE!

The Immortal qi grew more majestic as the Flying Rain-Dragon opened its eyes. It spread out its wings inside of Meng Hao, and massive rumbling sounds could be heard as it transformed into an Immortal meridian which rapidly grew solid!

Thirty percent. Fifty percent. Seventy percent....

Meng Hao's eyes gleamed with a brilliant light, and he suddenly took in a deep breath, absorbing all of the Immortal qi. Rumbling sounds could be heard, after which, the Flying Rain-Dragon Immortal meridian reached eighty percent, ninety percent, and finally... one hundred percent!

When that happened, Meng Hao's aura rose explosively!

The vague images of lamps once again appeared around Meng Hao, swirling through the air. It was impossible to clearly see exactly how many lamps there were, and yet, they were definitely much clearer than earlier.

An energy rose up from Meng Hao's body that seemed to be Immortal, and yet not, and at the same time Ancient, and yet not.

In addition, a 122nd Immortal dragon appeared outside the Door of Immortality, and this time, it looked completely different than the other dragons. It was a Flying Rain-Dragon!

It had huge wings, its tail was a poisonous viper, and its head was shocking in the extreme!

This was a Flying Rain-Dragon, which in the Nine Mountains and Seas was known by another name. It was also called... Outsider Dragon!

The Ninth Mountain and Sea was in an uproar.

To open another meridian after the 121st was fundamentally shocking, but then, it resulted in an Outsider Dragon materializing. Everyone was completely shocked.

It was as if every time Meng Hao reached his peak, and the conclusion was in sight, he would tell you through his actions... that things WEREN'T over!

The Patriarchs of the various sects and clans all had profound gleams in their eyes as they watched Meng Hao, this cultivator of the Junior generation, who performed one shocking deed after another.

Gradually, they were coming to the conclusion that they were watching the rise of a young Paragon.

"It's been a very, very long time... since a stunning individual like this has appeared in the Ninth Mountain!"

"The only other one... was Lord Li!"

"That's right! The only other person like this... was Lord Li, the mysterious figure who legends say wasn't even from the Nine Mountains and Seas!"

The Elder generation of cultivators sighed, and they wore complex expressions on their faces as they looked at Meng Hao and said nothing further.

The Chosen who were of the same generation as Meng Hao stood in front of their respective teleportation portals, collapsing mentally. They were proud people, and right now, they were being trampled on. All of their vast preparations were laughable, and the glory they had just acquired... was already becoming a thing of the past.

A young man from Planet South Heaven, a cultivator who everyone had disregarded... had, in front of their very eyes, transformed into an insurmountable mountain.

All of them felt a twinge of sympathy for Fang Wei. After all, this kind of

feeling would be much stronger for him.

As for Fang Wei, he hovered in midair, laughing bitterly and trembling. Watching Meng Hao made him feel like his own existence was a joke. His eyes started to shine with madness, a madness that gradually began to overflow with jealousy, and then, killing intent even more intense than before.

"None of this matters. I still have ways to kill you!" Fang Wei raged inwardly. "I'll strike you down using your own Nirvana Fruits!"

Fang Xiushan stood in the crowds, his face pale. Suddenly, he felt regret, not for provoking Meng Hao, but for not being more ruthless before. Why hadn't he just violated clan rules and killed Meng Hao at the very beginning?

In contrast to Fang Xiushan, his own father, Fang Wei's grandfather, stood there calmly not too far off. He looked at Fang Xiushan, and then Fang Wei, and sighed.

"As long as a person is alive, he must have a goal. Since things have come to this point...I'll set the plan in motion earlier than anticipated.

"Does the Fang Clan exist eternally within a raging inferno, or will it diverge from its path and rise out of that inferno like a phoenix? Everything... depends on what happens now!" Fang Wei's grandfather, the normally taciturn old man, suddenly smiled.

It was a smile that contained an emotional sigh, but also, incredible ferocity!

Apparently, there were dark forces that had existed for unknown years in the Fang Clan... that were slowly beginning to bare their fangs!

Up in the starry sky, Meng Hao probed his 122 Immortal meridians, then looked up at the Door of Immortality. Once again, a wild look began to burn in his eyes.

"I can still... open one last meridian!" he said softly. It was at this point that he produced the bronze lamp from his bag of holding, within which burned a tongue of flame.

It was...

The Essence of Divine Flame!

\*

1. In previous chapters it said that Chen Fan joined the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto. I believe that was actually a mistake. Er Gen went back and forth between the two a couple times, and I thought he meant the former, but in the end, I'm pretty sure it should be the Solitary Sword Pavilion. I'll confirm this later and then go back to edit the previous mistaken chapters.
2. References to the Flying Rain-Dragon in the Ancient Demon Immortal Sect can be found in [chapter 560](#) and [568](#).
3. The mirror attacked the Flying Rain-Dragon Core in [chapter 24](#).
4. Meng Hao fused the Flying Rain-Dragon's Demonic Core into his Dao Pillars in [chapter 99](#), and his own Core in [chapter 303](#). I don't think it was specifically mentioned when he was actually forming his Nascent Souls, but when he reached Spirit Severing, the Flying Rain-Dragon made an appearance, in [chapter 676](#).

# Chapter 983: The Great Circle of the Immortal Realm!

Meng Hao's eyes were filled with obsession and madness. He had opened 122 meridians and had walked a path no one had trod before, even in ancient times. Not even the Lord of the Fourth Mountain and Sea, Kṣitigarbha, had done something like Meng Hao had when he became a true Immortal.

Meng Hao hovered there in the starry sky, the center of all attention. And yet, he still wasn't ready to give up. Flames danced in his eyes, a reflection of the Essence of Divine Flame in his palm. It was as if the Divine Flame had become the ambition within Meng Hao's eyes.

"My final meridian... the Essence of Divine Flame!" Meng Hao's heart was pounding. He knew that the Essence of Divine Flame was terrifying, but he couldn't hold back his excitement at the idea of it becoming his final meridian!

"If I can succeed in making this my 123rd meridian, then I won't have any regrets!"

"It's a gamble, but if I succeed, I'll have one more meridian. If I fail...." Meng Hao's heart thumped, but his eyes quickly gleamed with obsession.

"Who cares if I fail?!" His hair and clothing whipped about as his energy began to rise up. The starry sky trembled and rumbling sounds echoed out.

"Before the world appeared, before the beginning of Heaven and Earth, before time could even be calculated, perhaps... there were no such things as Immortals. Therefore... how did the first Immortal come to be?!"

"That first Immortal definitely walked his own path. He must have tried many things, and must have suffered many defeats before he finally found the correct path. The first person to succeed called himself Immortal, and that is how Immortals came to be!"

"It must have occurred in that way. Therefore, I can do the same thing. I,

Meng Hao, will become an Immortal in MY way!"

The majestic Door of Immortality, the boundless Immortal light, the unobstructed Immortal qi, the swirling Immortal dragons. These things served as foils to Meng Hao.

If this bit of Divine Flame were much larger, then it wouldn't matter how determined Meng Hao was, he would be incapable of absorbing much of it. However... there wasn't much of the flame present!

There was only a tiny bit in that bronze lamp!

"Rewards come only with risk. In life, there are many times... when the only way to acquire something is to make either a sacrifice or a huge gamble!" Meng Hao gripped the bronze lamp tightly, staring wildly at the Essence of Divine Flame therein.

As of this moment, the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea was all watching the cultivator named Meng Hao, and everyone could see the bronze lamp he held in his hand. Everyone could also see the flame that flickered inside of it.

However, even the Dao Realm experts were unable to see the bizarre properties of the bronze lamp. But they could sense that the flame inside of it contained... the power of Essence!

"Essence!! That flame in his hand is rippling with Essence!"

"Unfortunately, it's minuscule. If there were more of the Essence, then we might be able to gain enlightenment from it."

"In any case, whatever destiny that kid ran into before allowed him to get that Essence-containing object. Situations like this are extremely rare! Perhaps we might find some clues as to the origins of that Flame Essence on his person?" The almighty Dao Realm experts from the various sects and clans looked at the flame with brightly shining eyes.

However, it was at this point that the Dao Realm Patriarch of the Kunlun Society suddenly spoke, his voice ringing out in the ears of all his contemporaries in the Dao Realm.

“Ladies and gentlemen, this kid... comes from Planet South Heaven.”

When everyone heard that one sentence, their eyes widened, and many of them quashed whatever plans they had been making just now, and their expressions quickly turned into looks of regret. For people in the Dao Realm, Planet South Heaven was actually...

Completely taboo!

However, when the four old men from the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite saw the bronze lamp, their expressions... flickered with astonishment!

They gasped, then exchanged glances. Their eyes were filled with absolute disbelief.

“I can’t believe it.... That thing actually exists!!”

“I always thought it was just a legend. But, there it is! There can’t be any mistake... the patterns on that bronze lamp mean that there can be no doubt....”

“Somebody was actually able to touch it.... This... this....” The four old men felt their minds spinning, and great waves of astonishment battered their hearts.

As of that moment, all cultivators were staring at Meng Hao.

Everyone watched as Meng Hao, without any further hesitation, held the bronze lamp aloft. His expression was one of determination as he gritted his teeth for a moment, then opened his mouth and inhaled deeply.

In that instant, the flame in the bronze lamp flickered, then flew out of the bronze lamp. In the blink of an eye, it was sucked into Meng Hao’s mouth.

He consumed the Divine Flame!

When Meng Hao sucked in the Essence of Divine Flame, his mind filled with a roaring sound. At the same time, indescribable heat exploded within his throat.

Intense flames almost immediately scorched Meng Hao’s blood dry. Before he could even blink, his body was being burned into ash. No longer

was it merely blue veins popping out on his face, instead... numerous fissures spread out across his body.

The fissures were red, and when they opened, it seemed almost as if lava were about to explode out from inside of him.

He let out a protracted howl, and he shook violently. His eyes filled with madness. It was as if swallowing the Divine Flame was the same as swallowing an entire volcano!

Or perhaps... he was actually becoming a volcano!

His 122 Immortal meridians rotated at full power, and boundless Immortal power surged through him. However, all it could do was keep Meng Hao alive, and couldn't assimilate the Divine Flame.

Indescribable pain filled him as the flames roared, and he was rapidly reaching the point where he couldn't take it any more.

Popping sounds echoed out, and more fissures tore through Meng Hao's body. They spread out across his face and neck, and soon afterwards his entire body was covered.

Within those fissures was crimson light that seemed to indicate his body was about to explode.

Nobody could help him, not even the Dao Realm experts. This was his tribulation, his meridians, and his choice!

The only person who could help him was himself. And only by weathering this trial, only by successfully fusing with the Essence of Divine Flame, could he save himself.

"I absolutely must succeed!" The glow of fire seeped out of Meng Hao's eyes, and he could clearly sense the wild and intense power flowing through him that was the Divine Flame!

If he didn't already possess 122 Immortal meridians, then he would already have been completely transformed into ash. However, regardless of how unprecedented his previous gains were, he was still... approaching the point of collapse.

Right now, all of the Dao Realm Patriarchs were watching closely. The Fang Clan Earth Patriarch looked nervous, and his eyes were wide with anger.

"Bastard! Moron! Y-y-you... you seemed so smart, kid! How could you do something as rash as this? Dammit! 122 meridians is amazing. Why did you have to be so stubborn and try to open more?!" After cursing up a storm, the Earth Patriarch finally sighed and soon looked over at Meng Hao, his eyes glowing with praise.

From the perspective of the Fang Clan, he didn't want Meng Hao to be facing any serious peril. However, from the perspective of a cultivator, he had to admit that he approved of Meng Hao's wildness. When practicing cultivation, only by having an obsession with power that bordered on madness could one... truly become powerful.

He wasn't the only person thinking such thoughts. The Dao Realm Patriarchs from the various sects and clans were all watching Meng Hao, and suddenly, they looked at him differently than before. They could sense his madness, and his obsession with becoming powerful.

To make such a wild bet, to risk everything in the way he was, left them moved.

The experts from the Three Great Daoist Societies felt the same way.

Fang Wei hovered in midair, mind shaking as he watched what was happening. As for his father Fang Xiushan, he was starting to look extremely excited, even joyful.

"He's just looking to die!" he thought. "Well, the little son of a bitch is going to kill himself. Hahaha! I hope he blows up!"

The true Immortal Chosen of the Ninth Mountain and Sea saw Meng Hao's manifestation of obsession, and various expressions could be seen on their faces.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as the fissures spread out to cover Meng Hao completely, causing him to seem like he was cobbled together from a patchwork of pieces.

There were even some places on his face where the fissures merged together, causing pieces of his skin to begin to flake off and transform into dust. Finger-nail sized wounds could be seen, within which were not flesh and blood, but rather, a sea of flames.

As more and more of his skin began to fall off, Meng Hao's 122 Immortal meridians transformed into 122 Immortal dragons, and yet, even their 122 streams of power was not enough to stop what was happening.

Everyone watching began to pant, and their minds trembled.

Meng Hao roared, and his body shook. His vision was growing dim, and yet, the obsession in his eyes was growing more intense.

"I'm not going to fail! 122 Immortal meridians, and their more than 100 streams of power, seems incredible. However, since they're separated, it's naturally not enough....

"However, if those 122 Immortal meridians could all become Eternal Immortal meridians, then... my Eternal stratum would be 122 times more powerful!

"And then, I could definitely succeed!" Even as his mind spun, he considered his current predicament, and quickly came up with a solution. He suddenly trembled as all of his Immortal meridians began to change, transforming into.... Eternal Dragons!

122 Eternal Dragons exploded out, and the Eternal strata they formed instantly shook everything.

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLL!

Meng Hao threw his head back and howled. The fissures covering his body began to shrink, and the flames inside of him rapidly began to condense, gradually forming a Divine Flame Immortal meridian.

At the same time, the Door of Immortality erupted with billowing Immortal qi, which fused into his body, solidifying the Divine Flame Immortal meridian. Simultaneously, the terrifying injuries he had just sustained began to heal.

After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, his body was completely restored. When that happened, his eyes shone with an intense light of confidence. Furthermore, there was an energy inside him that rose up, making him even more powerful!

“Open the Divine Flame Immortal meridian!” he murmured, waving his hand as another Immortal meridian opened up inside his body.

123 meridians!

This was... Meng Hao’s final meridian!

Another Immortal dragon began to fly around the Door of Immortality!

The 123rd dragon!

The final dragon!

The great circle!

In that moment, Heaven and Earth filled with rumbling. They sky changed colors, and the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea was shaken!

Meng Hao had accomplished what no other person had ever accomplished, and perhaps... never would! He had opened 123 meridians, and had reached the great circle of the Immortal Realm!

# Chapter 984: 33 Heavens!

In the Immortal Realm... the number of Immortal meridians someone possessed would determine how weak or powerful they were in battle.

That was something everyone knew. However, virtually nobody knew what sort of destiny or transformations would appear when someone corroborated the Dao on their own.

That was because in the Nine Mountains and Seas, only Kṣitigarbha had ever succeeded. However, now that Meng Hao had opened 123 meridians, the Dao Realm Patriarchs, as well as the true Immortal Chosen and Ancient Realm experts, were all completely shaken, and were beginning to realize that something else might happen.

Immortals who corroborate their Dao on their own can actually transform their Immortal meridians!

This was not an ordinary transformation, but something which allowed the meridians to be merged in the form of a divine ability. In a brief moment... 120 times the level of normal power could be unleashed, a terrifying and shocking development that would strike awe into the hearts of any and all cultivators.

“Immortals who corroborate their Dao on their own do not need any sort of secret magic to be able to increase the power of their Immortal meridians when fighting. That is because such Immortals’ bodies are a secret magic unto themselves!”

“Such a thing is fearful and shocking! No wonder Kṣitigarbha came to be the Lord of the Fourth Mountain and Sea!”

“This kid... has unimaginable potential!”

The Ninth Mountain and Sea was in a commotion, as all eyes remained glued to Meng Hao.

What Meng Hao had done would surely turn into a legend, a myth!

123 meridians did not just place him in the number one position in the Immortal Realm in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Such a number was the

most that had been opened by anyone in ALL the Nine Mountains and Seas!

A true Saint fleshly body, and a true Immortal cultivation base!

As of this moment, he was a Paragon! An Immortal Realm Paragon!

He was surrounded by 123 astonishing, roaring Immortal dragons. The last of those dragons was composed entirely of flame, and emanated a powerful Essence aura!

"It's over." Meng Hao murmured. He could sense the boundless Immortal power within him, making his cultivation base completely different than before. By way of comparison, it could be said that before Meng Hao had been a tree, and now, he was a forest!

The sense of power that flowed through his body causes his eyes to shine with bright light as he looked up. He could sense his blood boiling, and could clearly detect the Immortal qi within him.

After a long moment passed, he stretched out both hands.

"Return!" As the single word echoed out, the 123 Immortal dragons outside the Door of Immortality roared, and then shot directly toward Meng Hao. Rumbling could be heard as they merged into him, causing his energy to surge.

Finally, the Door of Immortality began to fade away. The Immortal light faded until it was gone, and the Immortal qi dried up. Meng Hao's true Immortal Tribulation...

Had been thoroughly transcended!!

He was now an Immortal!

His long hair flew about, and he emanated the aura of an Immortal. His entire person had moved beyond the mortal form, and he was now completely different. Before, he had been handsome, but now he exuded an otherworldly air, as if his mere presence was enough to attract the attention of all onlookers.

In the same moment that the Door of Immortality faded away

completely, it was suddenly possible to see a projected image around him!

Countless celestial soldiers wearing golden armor appeared. They stretched out in all directions, too many to count, and they gazed at Meng Hao briefly before dropping to their knees to kowtow.

At the same time, the numerous Immortal Palaces appeared anew, filling the area. An enormous pedestal appeared beneath Meng Hao's feet, which lifted him up to overlook everyone.

Immortal light appeared again, spreading out boundlessly, and swirling clouds filled the area.

Innumerable golden dragons swirled about up above, letting out subservient roars. From a distance, it was possible to see the celestial soldiers kowtowing, the golden dragons capitulating, and then, countless blurry figures emerging from the Immortal palaces, who then clasped hands and bowed deeply to Meng Hao.

The sky went dim, and the starry sky trembled. All of the cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea who were watching Meng Hao went completely silent when they saw what was happening.

This was... a sign!

When Fan Dong'er became Immortal, dragons and phoenixes danced. When Fang Wei reached Immortality, 10,000 soldiers bowed. In fact, signs had appeared when all of the other Chosen had reached Immortal Ascension.

Now, a sign appeared for Meng Hao as well.

However, compared to those of the others, this sign was far more majestic and shocking!

In fact, many people assumed that this sign was the end when, all of a sudden, something else appeared in Meng Hao's vicinity... nine mountains!

These were nine mountains that caused Heaven and Earth to tremble, mountains that were like Imperial Lords!

Between each mountain was a sea, which meant that there were also nine seas!

Nine Mountains! Nine Seas! A sun, a moon, and heavenly bodies all orbiting around them!

Everyone who could see this was shaken mentally. To people who lived in the realm of the Nine Mountains and Seas, there was nothing more stunning than this image, nor would anything be able to match its splendor.

"Nine Mountains and Nine Seas.... I can't believe he caused a sign like that to appear! So corroborating your own Dao is actually this powerful!!"

"Could it be... that this represents the approval of the Nine Mountains and Seas themselves? Above Paragons are Imperial Lords! Does he have the aura of an Imperial Lord on him?!"

"From today on, the Ninth Mountain and Sea... has a new blazing sun that will surely cause all of the Mountains and Seas to tremble!!" Everyone was in an uproar as they looked at Meng Hao; they simply couldn't remain calm. From the moment he had begun to transcend his tribulation, he was completely different than anyone else, and that wouldn't stop. Even though he had already finished transcending tribulation, and the Door of Immortality had vanished, he was still shocking everyone.

Meng Hao glanced around at the signs around him, and then looked emotionally in the direction of Planet South Heaven.

"Dad, mom," he murmured. "I've risen to prominence in the Fang Clan!"

"Master, can you see me from where you are in the Kunlun Society?"

"Foster father, can your spirit in Heaven see me, sir?"

"Qing'er... can you see me?" This was a moment in which he should be extremely happy and excited. However... in reality, there was no one standing next to him with whom to share his smile.

His father and mother were on Planet South Heaven. His master was in the Kunlun Society. His foster father... had long since returned to the dust.

His wife Xu Qing... was now in some unknown place undergoing reincarnation.

Meng Hao sighed, then looked up and did his best to put his emotions in order. Once again, his eyes began to shine with a bright light.

"My Immortal meridians are opened. Next... it's time to form my Immortal souls!"

"Everyone has three spiritual souls and seven physical souls. Therefore, 100 opened meridians can form 10 souls!"

"Based on my understanding, after 100 meridians, each additional meridian should be able to produce another soul!"

"Immortal souls... form!" he said calmly. In the moment that the words left his mouth, his Immortal meridians emitted intense rumbling sounds.

Shockingly, a huge Dharma Idol appeared behind him. As of now, it was most accurate to say that the Dharma Idol... was the soul of a true Immortal!

36,900 meters! 1

Rumbling could be heard as a 2nd soul formed, then a 3rd, and a 4th....

10 true Immortal souls all appeared, each one of which exuded shocking power that emanated out in all directions. Then an 11th, a 12th, a 13th... all appeared.

Each soul which appeared caused anyone who looked at it to shake and tremble. Ripples emanated out into the starry sky, and Meng Hao's energy rose up higher and higher.

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLE!

21 souls. 22 souls. 23 souls!

Soon, 29 souls had appeared, and then 30!

An entire collection of Immortal souls appeared behind Meng Hao. In addition to the original 10, more Immortal souls appeared due to his various aggregations of destiny and divine abilities.

31 souls. 32 souls.... In the end, there were 33 souls!!

These 33 true Immortal souls caused 33 types of incredible pressure to spread out. It was as if... 33 Heavens had appeared!

How many Heavens exist? The 33 Heavens are ultimate!

In the legends of the Nine Mountains and Seas, above the Nine Mountains were 33 Heavens. If someone could break through those 33 Heavens, they could leave the Nine Mountains and Seas.

That was referred to... as the path of the Mountain and Sea Tribulation!

Meng Hao's cultivation base roared, but he did not turn to look back behind him. He could sense the power of the 33 true Immortal souls behind him, and yet wasn't sure exactly how powerful he was.

However, he was sure... that if he went back to the ancestral land now and faced those Ancient Realm experts with one extinguished Soul Lamp, then he wouldn't even need the assistance of the terracotta soldier... to slaughter them!

Heaven and Earth rumbled as Meng Hao hovered there in the starry sky. Beneath his feet was a pedestal, and he was surrounded by innumerable kowtowing celestial soldiers. Nine Mountains and Nine Seas could be seen, including a sun and a moon. Further off, figures emerged from the Immortal Palaces to clasp hands and bow.

Behind him were 33 true Immortal souls, which transformed into 33 Heavens!

Anyone who could see what was happening was thoroughly shocked.

“33 Heavens.... No wonder he opened 123 meridians!”

“That is the limit of the Immortal Realm in the Nine Mountains and Seas. That is the true great circle!” The Dao Realm Patriarchs of the various sects and clans all understood this point. They looked at Meng Hao, and what they saw was a blazing sun of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, someone who would soon move on to even more glory.

At the same time, the true Immortal Chosen of the various sects and

clans all looked on silently. From their expressions, it was possible to tell that they wished to fight Meng Hao more than anything. All of the Chosen, regardless of whether they had ever had dealings with Meng Hao, were filled with an intense desire to do battle.

"I have to fight! If I don't, I'll be eternally plagued by this inner Devil!"

"The only way to walk my own path is to dare to battle him, and defeat him! Then I can struggle for glory in this era!"

"He has the secret magic that allowed him to become an Immortal who corroborated the Dao on his own. However, we have our own secret magics, legacies passed down in our sects, which enable us to dramatically multiply the power of our own Immortal meridians. Therefore, fighting him... is not an impossibility!"

Taiyang Zi was obsessed. Song Luodan had both fists clenched. Wang Mu's expression flickered with killing intent. Zhao Yifan had drawn his sword. Fan Dong'er's eyes glittered brightly.

Li Ling'er, Sun Hai, and even Wang Tengfei, as well as others who Meng Hao had never even seen before, all of the Chosen who had broken through to true Immortality...

All had the intense desire to fight!

Naturally, Fang Wei was no exception. He hovered in midair, looking up at Meng Hao in the starry sky, and in his eyes gleamed with all of the desire to fight that he could muster.

"I'm Fang Wei, and in this era, Fang Hao, you can't be allowed to be the only one who shines with glory!" Fang Wei took a deep breath and then calmed himself. Personally witnessing Meng Hao transcending his tribulation was a life-changing experience, almost like a baptism.

\*

1. 36,900 meters is 12,300 zhang. Or if you read it directly in Chinese, it's ONE (ten thousand) TWO (thousand) THREE (hundred) ZHANG!



# Chapter 985: Fight!

33 Immortal souls were completely shocking. Countless celestial soldiers kowtowed, causing the starry sky to tremble. Meng Hao stood in the void atop a pedestal, looking around as the signs gradually faded away.

After they were completely gone, he was officially in the true Immortal Realm, and had reached the peak of the Realm, making him an Immortal Realm Paragon.

In that moment, the Ninth Mountain and Sea was completely silent. All observing cultivators stopped breathing as the image of Meng Hao turned into a mark which was branded onto their hearts.

It was an indelible mark that would never fade away!

It didn't take long, though, for a hubbub to break out, especially on Planet East Victory. Everyone, including members of the Fang Clan and other clans, exploded into a huge commotion.

Cries rang out in all directions.

“Fang Hao!”

“Fang Hao!!”

“FANG HAO!!!”

Meng Hao's name was being shouted out by innumerable mouths, echoing out in all the Heavens, rocking the lands. As of this moment, he was the blazing sun of the Fang Clan, their pride and joy.

Fang Xiushan stood in the crowd, his face a mass of ferocity. His fists were clenched tightly at his sides, and he was panting. Venomous ideas sprouted inside his mind and swirled violently.

His taciturn father bowed his head so that no one would be able to see the sinister glint in his eyes.

The Grand Elder stood not too far off, silent. He sighed inwardly.

The rest of the members of the Fang Clan were crying out with joy. Up in midair, Fang Wei hovered calmly and silently, the desire to do battle

that shone in his eyes growing more and more intense.

All of the various sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea were boiling with excitement.

Far up in the starry sky, Meng Hao turned to face Planet South Heaven, dropped down onto one knee, and bowed deeply.

The eyes of all the cultivators in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were upon him as he bowed toward Planet South Heaven. What he was bowing to was not Heaven and Earth, and was not the planet itself. No, he was bowing to his father and mother!

In that moment, Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li stood in the Tower of Tang on Planet South Heaven, watching Meng Hao. His mother was extremely excited, and tears of joy filled her eyes, as well as intense pride.

That was her son!

Fang Xiufeng couldn't keep his expression calm. A wide smile broke out on his face, the smile that comes from seeing one's own son become like a dragon. He took a deep breath and then started to laugh.

Naturally, he was well-aware who Meng Hao was bowing to.

As of this moment, the rancor that had been building up in him after leaving the Fang Clan was finally released, thanks to his son Meng Hao. Not only had his son returned home to the clan, he had risen up to become a blazing sun.

Outside of Planet East Victory, Meng Hao rose to his feet again. The signs had faded away, and now the 33 Immortal souls also vanished.

It was then that the true Immortal Chosen of the Ninth Mountain and Sea felt their desire to fight raging, and their faces flickering with obsession.

FIGHT!

What did it matter if they were defeated? They would fight anyway!

If they did not fight, then the inner Devil that Meng Hao had become would plague them for the rest of their lives, and that Devilish image

would make it almost impossible to walk their own paths.

Therefore, they had to fight!

They needed to go all out, to hold nothing back and fight!

Their only option was to confront him directly. That was the only way to ensure that they would have the chance for further breakthroughs in the future. That was the only way to guarantee that they could pursue their own Dao!

Taiyang Zi was the first true Immortal Chosen to step into a teleportation portal. He was the Dao Child from Mount Sun, one of the Five Great Holy Lands. He was one of only two members of Mount Sun who had stepped into true Immortality in this generation. He had his pride, and he had his goals and obsessions, and he would fight!

Rumbling sounds filled the air as he set foot into the teleportation portal and vanished. When he reappeared, shockingly, he was right outside of Planet East Victory. He immediately turned toward Meng Hao and began to fly toward him.

“Meng Hao!” He did not shout the name Meng Hao used in the Fang Clan, Fang Hao, nor did he shout the name he had used in the Three Great Daoist Societies’ trial by fire. He shouted his true name, the name he had used on Planet South Heaven!

His cry turned into something like a sound wave that surged out through the starry sky. Taiyang Zi then transformed into a sun that radiated boundless, scintillating light, shocking to the extreme as he barrelled toward Meng Hao.

“Let’s fight!!” Taiyang Zi’s eyes were bright red, and he fairly burst with power. He had opened up more than 90 Immortal meridians, and all of them surged with power. The energy of a true Immortal erupted out.

As his energy skyrocketed, sun-form Taiyang Zi instantly caught the attention of all cultivators, who were completely surprised.

“They’re going to fight!!”

“They have to fight this battle. If I were a Chosen, I would attack too. I wouldn’t be afraid of losing, or of dying. What I would fear... would be not daring to fight! Not daring to draw my sword!”

“This Taiyang Zi is the first person to attack! He will definitely be an extraordinary individual in the future!” Innumerable spectators were now waiting for the fight to begin.

“In this era of true Immortals, whoever manages to defeat Meng Hao... will be able to rise to the top!”

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered as he looked at Taiyang Zi shooting toward him. Back when he was making his breakthrough, he had assumed people would come to fight him. However, he never imagined that the first person to do so would be Taiyang Zi, and not Fang Wei.

“Well,” Meng Hao said indifferently, “you owe me some money, you know....” His expression was very calm, as if his words were completely and utterly proper, without the slightest bit of impropriety.

His words instantly caused Taiyang Zi’s aggressiveness to falter....

All of the cultivators in the Ninth Mountain and Sea who were watching the event stared in shock.

“But...” continued Meng Hao, “if you want to fight, then let’s fight!” As soon as he finished speaking, brilliant light burst out of his eyes, and he took a step forward toward Taiyang Zi.

As he stepped out, Taiyang Zi roared angrily, and his aggressive energy soared up again. Innumerable magical symbols appeared on the surface of his sun-form, which transformed into shocking ripples that shot toward Meng Hao. Taiyang Zi roared, then extended his right foot and began to spin in circles in an attack on Meng Hao.

All of the power of his cultivation base burst out, just for this battle!

Behind him, an enormous Dharma Idol appeared. Shockingly, it was an image of a sun, which merged with his divine ability to make his sun-form incredibly realistic. He looked exactly like a real heavenly body, as if he had poured all of his life force into this attack.

Meng Hao's right hand balled up into a fist, and as Taiyang Zi's leg descended toward him, he casually struck out, almost as if he weren't even trying!

In the blink of an eye, the fist and the leg slammed into each other.

A huge boom rose up, shaking the starry sky. The Heavens dimmed, and the wind changed direction. An intensely powerful shockwave spread out in all directions. All of the cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea watched as Taiyang Zi's sun-form completely collapsed under the force of Meng Hao's blow. It shattered and dissipated instantly.

It was as if Meng Hao had detonated a sun!

Blood sprayed out of Taiyang Zi's mouth, and he flopped backward like a kite with its string cut.

Meng Hao hovered in the starry sky. His hair was not flying about, and his clothing was completely smooth and unmoving. His fist remained outstretched in that pose for a moment, and then, face calm, he slowly pulled his arm back.

One punch!

Meng Hao had crushed the divine ability of a true Immortal Chosen with more than 90 meridians as easily as stepping onto dry weeds!

The Ninth Mountain and Sea was completely silent. Although everyone had assumed that Meng Hao would win spectacularly, to witness what they just had just witnessed left them shocked. That was especially true... because although they weren't capable of assessing the full extent of Meng Hao's power, they could now make some speculations.

"That was only one punch.... He didn't even use his Dharma Idol...."

"This Meng Hao, just... just how powerful is he!?!?"

Even as everyone gave voice to their shock, Taiyang Zi managed to force himself to a stop. His face was pale, and he coughed up a huge mouthful of blood. He looked up, his face twisted with rage, and his desire to do battle even stronger than before.

“Meng Hao, our battle isn’t over yet!

“Secret magic, Sacred Sun Scripture!” Taiyang Zi performed a double-handed incantation gesture, then hit various pressure points on his body, 49 times. Apparently, he wanted to continue, but had reached his limit. His face turned bright red, after which he threw his head back and roared as his energy surged up.

Moments ago, he had been filled with the power of more than 90 Immortal meridians. Now, though, ripples spread out that contained at twenty percent more than that level of power! He now had the energy of more than 110 Immortal meridians!

Secret magic!

Every sect and clan had Immortal Realm secret magics, powerful magics that could be cultivated at a heavy price, and were bestowed only upon members who qualified to study them.

In fact, Meng Hao had never been able to learn any of the Fang Clan’s Immortal meridian secret magics!

As Taiyang Zi’s energy rose up, his Dharma Idol disappeared, and in its place, shockingly, were 9 Immortal souls!

Each of those Immortal souls took the shape of a sun, making it so that Taiyang Zi was backed by 9 suns. The suns linked together, transforming into a majestic image that emanated shocking energy.

Booms echoed out in the Heavens, spreading out through the starry sky. Taiyang Zi’s eyes were bright red as he looked at Meng Hao. He suddenly pointed out, causing the 9 suns to shoot toward Meng Hao. At the same time, Taiyang Zi performed an incantation gesture, causing the power of more than 110 Immortal meridians to form an image of a bow in his left hand. He gripped the bowstring with his right hand, pulled it back, and then released it.

“Sacred Sun Scripture, Immortal Arrow Nine Suns Destruction!”

All eyes were glued on the scene playing out. Countless individuals felt their hearts pounding as a streak of golden light shot through the starry

sky like a sharp arrow.

Meng Hao's expression was as calm as ever. It didn't matter that Taiyang Zi had unleashed a secret magic like this. Meng Hao simply sighed.

"You owe me a lot of money, which makes fighting you a bit more tricky," he said. Shaking his head, he took a step forward. As his foot descended, the 9 suns bore down on him, inundating him completely.

"Detonate!!" roared Taiyang Zi. The 9 suns exploded, creating a deafening roar that sent ripples out in all directions. At the same time, the golden arrow stabbed in through the ripples.

Taiyang Zi's face was ashen, and he coughed up a mouthful of blood. He was now much weaker; utilizing the secret magic was far too much of a drain on him. It was at this point that his eyes suddenly went wide with disbelief and astonishment.

As the ripples faded away from the starry sky, Meng Hao became visible, hovering in the exact same position he had been before. He wasn't injured in the slightest, and in fact, his expression hadn't even changed. Held in between his thumb and index finger was a trembling, golden beam of light.

"Your debt is now doubled," he said coolly. With that he pushed down, and a cracking sound could be heard as the golden light... shattered.

Taiyang Zi coughed up a mouthful of blood, staggering backward in shock. He had been prepared for the possibility that Meng Hao could defend against his divine ability, but he could never have predicted that even after draining himself to unleash a secret magic, Meng Hao would actually... defeat it with only two fingers!

# Chapter 986: Six Experts vs. Meng Hao!

The Ninth Mountain and Sea was completely silent.

All of the cultivators who had just watched the fight between Meng Hao and Taiyang Zi were completely astonished. Even members of the Ancient Realm were a bit frightened by Meng Hao.

At the moment, none of them were truly clear regarding... exactly how powerful he was!

That was because, as far as anyone could remember, there had never been a person like Meng Hao in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. He had corroborated the Dao on his own, and had opened 123 meridians, then formed 33 Immortal souls.

"He... didn't even use his Immortal meridians, or his Immortal souls...."

"He fought Taiyang Zi using only the power of his fleshly body!!"

"I think I get it. He has a true Immortal fleshly body, and because he has Immortal meridians and is bolstered by Immortal qi, his fleshly body is already at the peak of the Immortal Realm!!" After a moment of silence, voices began to ring out. Everyone was completely mystified by Meng Hao's unfathomable secrets.

Taiyang Zi's face was pale as he looked bitterly at Meng Hao. He took a few steps back, and was just about to simply leave, when suddenly, the starry sky filled with the glow of multiple teleportation portals.

This time, there were two that opened up at almost exactly the same time. The bright light of teleportation shone out, and soon, more people arrived.

Two figures emerged from the teleportation portals.

One was Song Luodan, Dao Child of the Song Clan, true Immortal Chosen of his people. The other person... was a true Immortal from the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum. He was young, and had a dark red bundle strapped to his back.

The vertical bundle was narrow and somewhat tall, and from the look of it, contained a corpse.

This was someone Meng Hao had never seen before.

“Meng Hao!” Song Luodan’s energy surged violently as soon as he appeared, and he immediately unleashed a Song Clan secret magic, which caused his Immortal meridians to explode with far more power than normal, sending ripples out in all directions.

In much the same way as Taiyang Zi, he was using a secret magic to cause his Immortal meridians to increase in power by about twenty percent. It was as if he had more than 110 meridians. Furthermore, 9 Immortal souls appeared behind him.

However, just when everyone assumed Song Luodan was finished powering up, he threw his head back and roared. Instantly, a 10th Immortal soul appeared behind him, and then another one!

With a total of 11 Immortal souls, Song Luodan’s power erupted; he raised his right hand, within which appeared a long spear.

The spear was green, and emanated a profound ancientness. As soon as it appeared, the starry sky trembled.

“Meng Hao, come and fight me!” Song Luodan hurled the spear out with a burst of energy.

At the same time, the young man from the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum stood there grim-faced and silent. He suddenly raised his right hand, causing the bundle to fly out from behind him. It rapidly unwrapped, revealing a shriveled corpse!

The corpse was completely withered, and emanated an archaic air. This was none other than... a corpse from ancient times!

The young man from the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum bit down on the tip of his tongue, then spit out a mouthful of blood. At the same time, he dropped down to sit cross-legged, and closed his eyes. He pushed down onto his forehead, from within which shot a beam of light. After fusing with his blood, it turned into a blood-red beam that entered into the

corpse.

A tremor ran through the corpse as its flesh and blood seemed to revive. In the blink of an eye, it turned into a middle-aged man, whose eyes snapped open. His body rumbled, and the aura of Immortal meridians instantly surged out.

This was also a secret magic, manifest via the use of an ancient corpse. Although no Immortal souls appeared, it emanated a shocking pressure that exuded ripples equivalent to 120 Immortal meridians. At the same time, Immortal dragons appeared and began to swirl through the air.

Everyone was now paying rapt attention to what was happening!

“Wow, look at Song Luodan! He’s even stronger than Taiyang Zi! He’s also cultivated the second level of his secret magic. As for the first level, although he hasn’t made too much progress and can only increase his Immortal meridians by twenty percent, that’s still extremely powerful!”

“I heard that all the sects and clans in the Ninth Mountain and Sea have secret magics. They’re all virtually the same in that they have three levels. The first level can essentially add illusory Immortal meridians, even doubling the real ones in some cases! The second level expands the number of Immortal souls, and the last level... takes the illusory and makes it corporeal!”

“Yu Xinglong from the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum is also extraordinary. Their magical techniques are sinister and bizarre, and even though he hasn’t cultivated the second level, his advancement in the first level still increases his power by more than twenty percent, a power similar to about 120 meridians!” 1

Even as the Ninth Mountain and Sea cultivators commented on the scene playing out, Meng Hao’s voice echoed out through the starry sky.

“Danny,” he said, belittling Song Luodan by calling him a pet name, “you also owe me some money.” He looked over at Song Luodan, and frowned. His demeanor and his wording were exactly like someone from the Senior generation reprimanding a naughty member of the Junior generation.

As soon as the words left his mouth, Song Luodan's face went purple. The matter of being in debt to Meng Hao was something he considered to be the biggest humiliation of his entire life. He let out a roar and charged directly toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao then looked over at the young man from the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum, and his eyes shone with a strange light.

"No one from the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum owes me money yet.... However, I do happen to know somebody by the name of Xiao Luo." 2

Almost in the same moment that Song Luodan launched his attack, Yu Xinglong from the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum sent the corpse forward. Its energy surged as it attacked with Song Luodan, the two of them versus Meng Hao.

They moved with incredible speed. Song Luodan's spear ripped through the air, sending ripples out into the starry sky as it stabbed toward Meng Hao. Booms echoed out in all directions.

A vicious gleam appeared in Meng Hao's eyes. He took a step forward, and suddenly the starry sky seemed to shrink. In the blink of an eye, he was directly in front of Song Luodan. Once again, he lifted his right hand and punched out.

BOOM!

When the punch landed, the spear shattered, and blood sprayed out Song Luodan's mouth. At the same time, the 11 Immortal souls behind him roared, rumbling down toward Meng Hao like eleven giant mountains. Once again, Meng Hao's fist lashed out.

BOOOOMMMMM!

The fist slammed into the eleven mountains, causing them to tremble and then collapse into pieces amidst massive rumbling sounds. Meng Hao's one punch destroyed them all as if they were dried grass. Then, it slammed into Song Luodan's chest.

Song Luodan let out a muffled grunt. Blood spurted out of his mouth as he tumbled backward.

Simultaneously, Meng Hao spun, eyes blazing as he faced the incoming ancient corpse. His gaze was like lightning, instantly stifling the ancient corpse's surging energy.

Then... he let out another punch!

A huge boom could be heard. Meng Hao had held back a bit with Song Luodan. However, the young man from the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum didn't owe him any money, so when he punched, he backed it with the full power of his fleshly body. The ancient corpse had Immortal power similar to 120 meridians, but that didn't matter; it instantly shook and then simply exploded, shattering into countless pieces as it was completely destroyed.

In the moment that the corpse exploded, Yu Xinglong spat up a mouthful of blood. His eyes snapped open, and they were filled with astonishment.

"Too powerful!"

At the same time, three teleportation portals suddenly flashed into being in the area around them. Boundless light rose up, and ripples emanated out into the starry sky.

Three figures flew out from the teleportation portals at top speed, not stopping for even a moment as they headed toward Meng Hao.

One of them was Wang Mu!

As a Chosen of the Wang Clan, this was not the first time he and Meng Hao had fought. He was the youngest of these Chosen, but his ambitions exceeded that of most the others.

"Meng Hao!" he roared. As he flew out, a strange aura surged. His Immortal meridians emanated the ripples of a secret magic as his energy rose up. All of his power then focused onto his index finger as he pointed toward Meng Hao.

The second person to fly out was Xie Yixian from the Burning Incense Stick Society. 3

During the Three Great Daoist Societies' trial by fire, Xie Yixian's power

attracted quite a bit of attention. He was a Chosen who had made it into the top 4. As soon as he appeared near Meng Hao, mists swirled out around him, forming an area that was like his own kingdom!

“Fang Mu!” Xie Yixian’s eyes flickered with the desire to do battle, and his Immortal meridians erupted with the full bolstering power of a secret magic.

The final person to appear was Chen Hao from the Bones of the Flamedevil, one of the Five Great Holy Lands. 4

As soon as he stepped out of the teleportation portal, a sea of flames erupted around him. It quickly transformed into more than 100 flame dragons, which roared as they swirled around him. Behind him, 12 Immortal souls appeared that looked like enormous flame giants.

The three people all emerged at the same time and attacked Meng Hao simultaneously.

At the same time, Song Luodan gritted his teeth, ignored the pain of his wounds, and attacked again. Next to him was Taiyang Zi, whose eyes gleamed with determination. Although these people were all Chosen, Meng Hao was so powerful that they had no choice but to join forces to fight him.

“I just have to beat him one time! Only once!” roared Taiyang Zi as he charged forward.

Then there was Yu Xinglong, whose face flickered with various emotions. Although his ancient corpse had been destroyed, he could still fight on his own. He joined in as well, his body emanating a death aura, and his Immortal meridians erupting with power as he shot toward Meng Hao.

Six cultivators joined forces to attack!

The starry sky filled with radiant light. All of the cultivators in the audience held their breath as they watched. It wasn’t that powerful people had never appeared before throughout the history of the true Immortal Realm of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, but never in any generation had

there been one blazing sun who had outstripped the other Chosen so far that it required several of them working together to put up a fight.

Meng Hao's eyes narrowed in concentration. As of this moment, even he had to take things a bit more seriously. His six opponents all had more than 90 meridians, and were utilizing secret magics. These people were the result of countless years of preparations on the part of their respective sects and clans, and were the hope for their future.

All of them were Dao Children in their sects and clans, and if Meng Hao hadn't appeared on the scene, would be in a position of glory.

"Interesting," said Meng Hao. His eyes gleamed with the desire to do battle, and to see exactly how powerful he was.

"The power of Immortal meridians...." he thought. His body emanated booms, 123 of them, each one of which represented the activation of one of his Immortal meridians.

"I also want to see if I, by myself, can fight back against all of these true Immortal Chosen of the Ninth Mountain and Sea!" His body rumbled as it emanated a powerful, domineering aura.

He didn't wait for his six opponents to close in. His body flickered as he charged them!

It was time to fight!

\*

1. Yu Xinglong's name in Chinese is 于兴龙 yú xìng lóng. Yu is a surname. Xing means "interest" or "desire." Long means "dragon".
2. Xiao Luo fought Meng Hao starting in [chapter 874](#).
3. Xie Yixian fought Meng Hao starting in [chapter 876](#).
4. Chen Hao fought Meng Hao starting in [chapter 871](#).

# Chapter 987: Meng Hao's Ambition!

However, in the moment that Meng Hao stepped forward, the energy of his six opponents surged higher. They transformed into six beams of light that shot directly toward him. As for Wang Mu, his eyes suddenly gleamed with a bizarre light, and he seemed to go crazy, causing ripples to spread out through the starry sky.

He suddenly raised his right hand, and a murky, flickering light appeared that began to suck in all of his soul and life force. It transformed into an attack... a profound Daoist magic of the Wang Clan that was incredibly difficult to master!

"Immobilize!" Wang Mu roared. His fingertip seemed to tear open the starry sky, causing all the ripples to stop in place. A terrifying power appeared which instantly wrapped around Meng Hao, forming invisible bonds that instantly immobilized him.

Although he couldn't move, it was different than his bodily Hexing. It was as if time had been stopped in place, as if Meng Hao's body was now suspended in eternity!

The scene which was playing out left everyone completely amazed.

However, before anyone could even react, the six attackers, including Wang Mu, transformed into something like six sharp swords. Their eyes flickered with battle lust, and their energy erupted as they attacked Meng Hao with virtually all of the life force they could muster.

Wang Mu's aura might have been greatly weakened, but even still he attacked explosively. He lifted his right hand and an illusory finger materialized.

"Wang Patriarch Finger Attack!" Rumbling echoed out as the gigantic, illusory finger seemed to replace the starry sky and descend upon Meng Hao. Brilliant energy surged, causing everything to seem to be on the verge of transforming into ash.

Xie Yixian's Burning Incense aura seethed, transforming into his own

personal kingdom and world. Using the power of his Immortal meridians, he fueled his Burning Incense World, causing the energy from the aura to form his personal kingdom. It transformed into countless images which then crushed down towards Meng Hao.

Chen Hao roared in rage. Flames surged around him as his Immortal meridians erupted with power. His flame dragons merged together, transforming into a gigantic dragon head, which opened its mouth as if to consume all living things.

Taiyang Zi went all out with everything he had. He spit out mouthfuls of blood, causing nine suns to appear in front of him, superimpose, and then transform into one huge sun that shot forward with deadly force.

Song Luodan's energy rocketed up. Gradually, a blade appeared above his head, the blade of the Song Clan, which was also a Dao. A Heavenly blade slashed down, like the arrival of a Heavenly Dao.

Last of all was Yu Xinglong. His body was completely stiff, as he spared no expense to transform himself into an ancient corpse. The aura of reincarnation emanated out, forming an incredible power that manifested in the form of a Corpse Needle.

The needle stabbed through the air directly toward Meng Hao's forehead.

The Ninth Mountain and Sea was completely shaken. Everyone looked on with reeling minds as the scene played out. Earlier, they had been shocked to see Meng Hao's one punch completely defeat various Chosen, and couldn't help but look down on the true Immortal Chosen a bit because of that. But now they were shocked to find that any one of these Chosen could single-handedly be blazing suns that could rock everything.

Now, the six of them joined forces in an Earth-shaking, Heaven-rocking attack.

"Meng Hao is going to lose!!"

In the blink of an eye, they engulfed Meng Hao. However, it was at this point... that intense booming sounds echoed out from within Meng Hao.

They were like thunder and lightning, exploding and rumbling ceaselessly. BOOM, BOOM, BOOM, BOOM....

Shockingly, exactly one hundred such sounds echoed out!

The hundred booming sounds represented the power of 100 Immortal meridians unleashing all their power. Instantly, the Wang Clan's bizarre immobilization technique fell apart.

As it collapsed, Wang Mu coughed up a mouthful of blood. It was as if his entire body had been scraped clean from the inside out. His expression was one of shock; he had never before experienced such an intense backlash from someone of the same generation as himself.

As for Meng Hao, all eyes were on him as booming sounds echoed out constantly. The power of one Immortal meridian after another erupted, causing Meng Hao's energy to skyrocket.

"Now it's my turn," he said, his eyes flickering with a cold light. Moments ago, the Wang Clan's magical technique had left him shaken. Now, his eyes brimmed with coldness as his body flickered, suddenly reappearing directly in front of Xie Yixian. As usual, he clenched his right hand and began to punch!

The first punch caused blood to spray out of Xie Yixian's mouth. His Burning Incense World, his kingdom, collapsed into pieces, and he was sent tumbling backward.

The second punch landed in front of Chen Hao. The flames which surrounded him suddenly encountered a fierce wind, and were extinguished. The shocking flame dragon head exploded, causing Chen Hao to let out a roar of defiance. However, he couldn't stop the blood from spraying out of his mouth.

The third punch descended towards Wang Mu. Meng Hao actually had fairly complex feelings regarding the Wang Clan. However, he also feared their divine ability. When his punch made contact with the finger attack, a huge boom rang out. The finger attack collapsed, and Wang Mu spit up a mouthful of blood and passed directly into unconsciousness.

Four punches, five punches, six punches!

Song Luodan's body was covered in a haze of blood. Taiyang Zi's chest caved in, and he appeared to be on the verge of death. Yu Xinglong from the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum saw his needle collapse into nothing more than bits of ash. His face was pale as Meng Hao's punch very nearly caused him to explode. In the end, he passed out.

Meng Hao didn't kill any of them. He had no enmity with them, and knew that as true Immortal Chosen, they were fighting this battle with him because of their own Daos.

Six punches. Six enemies completely swept aside. Meng Hao hovered there in the starry sky, hair whipping about. More booms could be heard coming from inside of him, until a total of 123 rang out, indicating that Meng Hao had unleashed the full power of his Immortal meridians.

"Too powerful!!"

"Immortal Realm Paragon!" Cries of astonishment could be heard throughout the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Meng Hao's current battle prowess left everyone completely shaken.

Countless spectators were watching this battle in the starry sky closely. It was a battle of Chosen, a battle of true Immortals that would determine the future standing of the various sects and clans.

At some point during the action, a strangely ordinary ship appeared in the boundless starry sky, completely undetectable even to the Ji Clan.

An older man sat on the ship, next to whom was a young man, who was frowning as he looked out at an illusory screen which depicted Meng Hao battling the various Chosen.

"Why are they fighting him?" the young man asked. "They have to know that they're not his match. What's the point? Don't these so-called Chosen of the Ninth Mountain and Sea completely overestimate their ability? If it were me, I would definitely prepare secretly to rise to prominence later! Looks like these people from the Ninth Mountain and Sea amount virtually nothing. They're all idiots. Fools!"

"That's because... they are Chosen," replied the older man softly. "They can accept defeat, and they can accept that they do not measure up to others. However, if they lack even the courage to fight, the determination to draw their swords, then they will forever... be unable to lift a finger against this boy named Fang Hao.

"They are in the Immortal Realm now, and despite the huge gap, if they refuse to fight now... then in the future, that gap will only widen. Then... they would forever lack the courage to fight." He lifted his glass of alcohol and took a sip.

"They'll even team up to fight him?" the young man said with a cold laugh. "Whatever would it prove if they won that way?"

"It would prove that he could be beaten by peers from the same generation," was the calm reply. "Lin'er, that is the difference between you and them. You cannot underestimate these people from the Nine Mountains and Seas."

The young man laughed coldly. "Ah, who cares? When it comes to them, we already—" He was about to continue when the older man glared at him sternly. The young man's heart thumped, and he swallowed his words.

No one detected the existence of the ship, as if they actually existed in a different time and space. They floated slowly through the starry sky, drifting off into the distance.

The battle was being watched by countless spectators, which was especially true considering... that what should have been a battle to showcase everyone's glory ended up being a whole group of people joining forces to attack Meng Hao, which made things even more interesting to the onlookers.

Of course, not all Chosen teamed up to attack Meng Hao. Fang Wei hovered motionless in midair, his eyes closed as he completely ignored what was happening in the starry sky. However, he was slowly building his energy, and his aura continued to grow more intense thanks to the amalgamation of his various Fang Clan secret magics. Furthermore, he had two Nirvana Fruits inside of him, which began to pulse as if they were

beating hearts.

He was waiting for his energy to reach its peak, whereupon he would battle it out with Meng Hao!

In addition to him, Fan Dong'er was also building up her energy. Then there was Zhao Yifan, Li Ling'er, as well as two other people.... One was from the Ji Clan, someone nobody else noticed because of the fact that the Ji Clan had kept the Door of Immortality concealed when it came to this person. The only thing that people knew was that she had entered true Immortality; no one had any idea of how many Immortal meridians she had. It was Ji Yin!

She was not the Dao Child of the Ji Clan. However, she was the number one figure underneath the Dao Child!

In addition to Ji Yin, there was Fan Dong'er of the Nine Seas God World, who had by this point been forgotten by the majority of people. Also from the Three Great Daoist Societies were Zhao Yifan and Zhou Xin from the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto. Of course, there was also the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite....

There was no one who knew of what blazing sun might emerge from the Rite, nor had anyone even heard any whispers of who it might be.

Almost in the same moment that Taiyang Zi and the other five Chosen were defeated, rumbling sounds filled the starry sky as more teleportation portals glimmered into existence. Numerous true Immortal Chosen appeared from the Three Churches and Six Sects, and also from the Holy Lands.

Some of them were people Meng Hao recognized, others were strangers. There were eleven or twelve of them, and they instantly caused explosive ripples to spread out. Each one of these people were blazing suns from their respective sects, and it was without hesitation that they joined forces to attack.

They knew that they couldn't possibly defeat Meng Hao by relying on their own strength. However, they needed this battle to result in a victory!

Therefore, they teamed up. If they could win, that would be enough to purge the Devils in their hearts, and would prove to them that Meng Hao... could be defeated in battle!

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLE!

Massive roaring echoed out as the dozen cultivators' Immortal meridians erupted. This was the era of true Immortals, so anyone who had risen to true Immortality, who had opened at least 90 Immortal meridians, and who had secret arts, unleashed their Immortal souls and powered up. They transformed into a dozen beams of prismatic light that shot directly toward Meng Hao.

All of them unleashed different divine abilities as they attacked Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's eyes shone with the desire to do battle. He looked around at his thirteen opponents, and his mouth twisted into a smile. A very cold smile.

His 123 Immortal meridians were in full rotation. As his enemies closed in, Meng Hao charged forward like an explosive dragon. Massive rumbling echoed out as a completely domineering aura emanated out from him. He clenched his hand into a fist and punched.

He slashed through everything like a sharp knife through bamboo. Everywhere he went, divine abilities collapsed, secret magics were destroyed, blood sprayed about, and everything shook.

Boundless ripples spread out through the starry sky like waves over water. Roars of defiance echoed out as Meng Hao simultaneously fought all of these true Immortal Chosen!

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLE!

The starry sky trembled and the Heavens dimmed. One punch. Another punch. ANOTHER!

Numerous enemies were sent tumbling away, blood spraying from their mouths. Bright beams of light were shattered, divine abilities were completely destroyed....

Among the audience, jaws dropped and eyes widened. Meng Hao was like a celestial warrior, and the image of him fighting was branded indefinitely into the minds of everyone in the current generation.

In the end, when all of the opponents were left ashen-faced, and when the final Chosen was sent flying backward in defeat, Meng Hao raised his hand and waved it toward the Heavens.

“A Writ of Karma!” Numerous Karma threads suddenly emerged from his body, as well as from the bodies of all of the Chosen, including the six he had fought earlier. In total, eighteen streams of Karma could be seen coming from the true Immortal Chosen.

Because of Meng Hao’s domineering cultivation base and Daoist magic, he was able to force the formation of Karma. It transformed into numerous promissory notes, which materialized in thin air and then floated down onto Meng Hao’s palm.

There was no need to write anything, nor any need for anyone to agree to the matter. That was because... they now owed him money!

His Karmic Daoist magic forced ties of destiny!

The instant that A Writ of Karma appeared, his eighteen opponents coughed up blood, and their eyes went bright red. The feeling of having destined ties and promissory notes forced upon them, and the sense that their Karma would be disturbed if they failed to pay back that debt, caused all of the Chosen to look over at Meng Hao, eyes bloodshot and seething with rage.

“Meng Hao, how dare you!!”

“Dammit, you’re too shameless!!”

The true Immortal Chosen all roared with fury.

“Shameless, huh?” he replied, his expression the same as ever, although slightly bashful. He cleared this throat continued on with an air of self-righteousness. “Well... you people wanted to fight me to solidify your Dao hearts; you were even willing to gang up on me. If you defeated me, your Dao hearts would be freed of their obstruction. In that case, I think I need

to collect some interest from you. If you think about it that way, I'm sure you'll agree...." It was just as he had said to Fang Xiufeng, that his dream was to get all of the Chosen in the Ninth Mountain and Sea to owe him money. 2

That dream... was already becoming a reality. All of a sudden, Meng Hao realized that he had actually set his ambitions a bit too low.

"I should have said that I want all of the Chosen in all the Nine Mountains and Seas to owe me money!" As this grand ambition rose up in his heart, he looked up, and his long hair drifted in the wind. His energy pulsed, and it was as if his desire caused all of the starry sky to tremble. Countless ripples emanated out in all directions.

As of this moment, the Ninth Mountain and Sea had fallen silent. Everyone was speechless as they gazed at Meng Hao. The true Immortal Chosen were in a rage, and yet, couldn't think of a single thing to say in response.

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1. As a quick reminder, "blade" and "Dao" sound very similar.
2. Meng Hao mentioned his ambition to get everyone to owe him money in chapter 841.

# Chapter 988: Wanna Get Married, Wifey?!

Fang Xiufeng wore a strange expression as he stood there on Planet South Heaven, looking at Meng Hao's A Writ of Karma. He also noticed Meng Hao's expression, and couldn't help but sigh emotionally.

Off to the side, Meng Li was chuckling. When she saw the look on Fang Xiufeng's face, she knew exactly what he was thinking.

"This kid was a charmer from the moment he was born," she said, laughing.

"Charmer?" said Fang Xiufeng, gaping. He hesitated for a moment. "He's your son. Right before he left, he did say that he wanted all of the Chosen in the Ninth Mountain and Sea to owe him money...."

"When Hao'er was born, I always knew that he would set different aspirations than everyone else. As for me, I was hoping that his grand ambition would be to get all of the pretty girls in the Ninth Mountain and Sea to become his beloved concubines." Meng Li smiled, and from her expression it could be seen how much she loved spoiling Meng Hao.

Fang Xiufeng stood there silently, shaking his head and smiling wryly. Only he knew that deep within his heart, there was something he felt somewhat indignant about, and that was the "Foster Father" Meng Hao had mentioned when Ke Jiusi gave him the Immortal meridian.

As Meng Hao's real father, the feelings that had been on display at that moment had caused a sour feeling to rise up in his heart. He couldn't quite accept the situation.

"You still haven't told me why you sent Hao'er to Planet East Victory. I know it's not just for those two Nirvana Fruits. I've asked you many times, and you never tell me, but this time, I want an answer!" Meng Li turned and gave Fang Xiufeng a serious look.

Fang Xiufeng looked quietly at his wife for a moment before finally saying, "You'll know soon enough."

Currently, the Ninth Mountain and Sea was completely silent, and

everyone was staring at Meng Hao. Meng Hao, who had single-handedly defeated all of these Chosen of the various sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Some had even joined forces, and yet, had still been defeated. Many of the observers were left completely shaken.

As Meng Hao hovered there in the starry sky, he looked around at the more than ten true Immortal Chosen, who were staring at him wrathfully. Unfortunately for them, there was nothing they could do. It was at this point that another teleportation portal suddenly blazed into existence in front of Meng Hao.

Zhao Yifan suddenly walked out of the teleportation portal, accompanied by a massive pillar of sword qi which billowed up from him. The stars trembled as mighty rumbling echoed out in all directions. The true Immortal Chosen in the area instantly stared over at him.

The cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea were all watching as Zhao Yifan made his appearance.

“Meng Hao,” he said. “Or should I say... Fang Mu! Long time no see!” As ever, he wore a long, cyan robe, which rippled as he walked, and had a sword strapped to his back. At the moment, the energy that emanated off of him far, far exceeded that which he had displayed at the three Great Daoist Societies’ trial by fire. It was like the difference between Heaven and Earth.

Zhao Yifan of the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto!

Meng Hao had fought him twice before. The first time was on Planet South Heaven, when the two had been separated by quite a distance, and had exchanged a single sword attack in midair.

The second time was during the Three Great Daoist Societies’ trial by fire. They had vied for first place, a battle in which Meng Hao had been forced to draw on all his battle prowess, and had even allowed a hidden Devilish will to send his heart and mind into chaos, all to be able to only injure Zhao Yifan!

Now, the two of them stared at each other, scenes from the past playing out in their mind's eyes.

"Zhao Yifan...." Meng Hao said slowly. Suddenly, the desire to fight rose up in his eyes. No further words needed to be spoken. There was no enmity between them, only... the need to do battle for the sake of their own Daos in this new era.

The surrounding true Immortal Chosen quickly grew silent and backed up. They had all been defeated, and would not attack again. Furthermore, they knew how powerful Zhao Yifan was, so their eyes flickered as they prepared for the battle which was about to take place.

The observing cultivators out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were recalling the things which had happened in the past between Meng Hao and Zhao Yifan.

"A battle between those two deserves to be the center of attention!"

"Back in the trial by fire, Zhao Yifan suffered a huge defeat. But now... he's become a true Immortal. Now that he's making another appearance, I wonder... if he'll get defeated again?"

"Going up against someone as inhuman as Meng Hao... Zhao Yifan will definitely suffer defeat!" As everyone discussed the matter, Meng Hao and Zhao Yifan faced off with proverbial swords drawn. Just when they were about to explode into action, a second teleportation portal suddenly appeared, then, immediately afterward, a third. Bright light filled the starry sky as Fan Dong'er walked out, the female corpse behind her, hair draped over its body. The incredible aura of a powerful expert instantly erupted out of Fan Dong'er.

"Meng Hao!" she said calmly, her alluring voice so icy that everything turned as cold as winter.

The corpse behind her had long black hair, and emanated the aura of death, causing anyone who looked at it to tremble.

"Eee?! Hello, Inky! I've missed you!" Meng Hao said, eyes shining brightly. After a moment, he continued, a bit embarrassedly, "And as for

you, little sis Dong'er, it's time you paid my money back!" His words caused Fan Dong'er's face to immediately darken. She didn't know why, but the instant she saw Meng Hao face to face, and heard his voice, and especially upon seeing the expression on his face... her Dao heart filled with an almost uncontrollable urge to give him several vicious kicks.

Even as she gritted her teeth, the third teleportation portal opened up behind her, and Li Ling'er slowly stepped out. She wore a long red gown, and her eyes blazed like lightning as she stared at Meng Hao. Her expression actually seemed a bit torn.

Meng Hao blinked, then smiled and said, "Heyo! Ling'er! Wifey! You're here too? Did you want to get married or something?"

When the observers in the Ninth Mountain and Sea heard his words, their eyes went wide. It was as if their ears had been struck by lightning.

"What did he just call Li Ling'er?"

"Dammit! He dared to call Li Li Ling'er wifey?!?!"

"Now that I think about it, this Fang Hao.... Years ago, the Fang Clan and the Li Clan were supposed to have made a marriage alliance...."

As the audience in the Ninth Mountain and Sea went into an uproar, Li Ling'er stared at Meng Hao and then suddenly smiled. In that moment, the complex look in her eye faded away. She was inherently beautiful, and when she smiled, she instantly radiated a bewitching charm.

"Husband," she said, smiling a beautiful smile, "you've gotten yourself involved with far too many beauties. Once you sever ties with them, then we can get married."

Meng Hao's eyes went wide. He had never imagined that Li Ling'er would accept his statement. When he saw the grin on her face, it made him feel that there was something suspicious about the whole situation. He laughed it off awkwardly, then his gaze turned cold as he turned to look at Zhao Yifan.

As soon as his gaze fell upon Zhao Yifan, Zhao Yifan's sword qi erupted, and he took a step forward, reaching his hand out, within which appeared

an illusory, azure-colored sword. As his fingers closed around the hilt of the sword, he did not speak. Instead, his body bent like a drawn bow, and then he suddenly slashed the sword out toward Meng Hao.

The sword caused everything to vibrate; the Heavens dimmed, and more than ninety Sword Dragons appeared within the sword light. They rapidly merged together to form a gigantic Azure Dragon, which roared as it slashed at the void with its claws. Its long whiskers floated in the air as it charged Meng Hao. Everywhere it went, the void shattered and was rent asunder, as if this Azure Dragon could destroy any and all obstacles that got in its way.

As the Azure Dragon closed in on Meng Hao, he raised his right hand and pointed out. Instantly, massive rumbling sounds could be heard as the Azure Dragon roared to a halt, and was incapable of moving forward even a centimeter.

“Shatter,” Meng Hao said coolly. A boom could be heard as the Azure Dragon collapsed, transforming into countless glittering sparks that rapidly dissipated.

The scene that was playing out instantly caused quite a few people to recall what had happened in the Three Great Daoist Societies’ trial by fire. What was happening now was somewhat similar, except that back then, Meng Hao had used a palm, and now he was using the casual wave of a single finger.

Zhao Yifan’s eyes glittered brightly as he reached out with his right hand, causing what appeared to be an ordinary sword to appear. It was none other than... his Cloud Sealing Sword!

He took five quick steps forward, and with each step, his energy soared higher and grew stronger!

“First Sword, Felling the Mortal!

“Second Sword, Shocking the Spirit!

“Third Sword, Severing the Immortal!

“Fourth Sword, Shattering the Ancient!

“Fifth Sword, Trampling the Heavens!” With every step, his energy surged, and he would slash out with his sword. Five steps, five Heaven-shaking sword attacks. The starry sky seemed to be on the verge of collapse. Cracking sounds could be heard as a huge fissure appeared, from within which appeared a gigantic claw that lashed out toward Meng Hao.

The claw looked like the five-talonied claw of a Sword Dragon, formed from five swords. As soon as it appeared, the Heavens trembled, and the expression of all onlookers instantly flickered. The audience in the Ninth Mountain and Sea gasped.

The desire to do battle gleamed even brighter in Meng Hao’s eyes. His expression was cold as his own energy surged, and the power of 123 Immortal meridians erupted!

He had seen these same sword forms the last time he had fought Zhao Yifan, but this time, they were far, far more powerful! Furthermore, at the moment, Meng Hao wanted nothing more than to see exactly how strong he was.

He took a step forward and raised his hand. He didn’t use any sort of divine ability, just one punch, which rocketed toward the incoming five-talonied claw!

123 Immortal meridians erupted, combining with the power of his fleshly body to form an astonishing aura that instantly slammed into the five-talonied claws.

Massive roaring filled the air, and everything shook. The claw shook for a moment and then shattered into countless pieces. Meng Hao continued to advance, his hair whipping about, his aura surging.

“Zhao Yifan, it’s time to use your most powerful secret magic. Otherwise... you’re just no match for me!” Meng Hao’s voice echoed out, and the domineering tone rose with each step he took. Zhao Yifan suddenly felt an intense pressure and urgency weighing down on him. Fan Dong’er’s face flickered, and Li Ling’er’s pupils constricted.

Zhao Yifan threw his head back and roared, then performed an incantation gesture with his right hand.

“Five Cleaving Swords, Rising Sword Form!” He waved his right hand, causing his Immortal meridians to rotate at full power. His more than 90 Immortal meridians now erupted with the battle prowess of more than 110 meridians.

“First Cleaving, Swords Cleave the Heavens!” Instantly, tens of thousands of flying swords filled the starry sky above Zhao Yifan. Under the shadow of all those swords, Zhao Yifan looked like a Paragon among swords, shocking to the extreme. Now, the power of more than 120 Immortal meridians exploded out within him!

“Second Cleaving, Immortal: Why Sever the Mundane World?!” Zhao Yifan’s aura exploded up. In their previous battle, he had been forced to destroy his Dharma Idol in order to fuel the second cleaving. This time, he unleashed the form without the slightest hitch. Furthermore, using this power caused his energy to surge to something similar to more than 130 Immortal meridians!

This was a true display of the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto’s Five Cleaving Swords. It was also the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto’s secret magic for the Immortal Realm. It was actually powerful enough to create a number of illusory meridians which could surpass the normal limit of 123 meridians. However, the Immortal souls that could be formed from those meridians were still limited to one soul per 10 meridians. Furthermore, because of the constraint of 33 Heavens, the maximum number of meridians possible, including those granted by secret magics, was 330, which was considered the great circle.

Throughout countless years, no one had ever been able to achieve that!

Meng Hao raised his head, and his eyes shone with brilliant light, like a cold, sharp sword.

# Chapter 989: That Same Feeling!

“Third Cleaving, Who Is Most Honored in Heaven?” Zhao Yifan cried out. His Immortal meridians once again sent out incredible pressure, and soon, the power he radiated was equal to more than 140 Immortal meridians!!

As soon as this power manifested, the Heavens dimmed, and a wild wind sprang up. All of the stars in the sky trembled, and, at the same time, Zhao Yifan began to shake. Having added to his Immortal Realm power by more than fifty percent, he had reached his limit, and was in a state that he could only maintain for a short time.

“Meng Hao, prepare to receive my most powerful attack!” He threw his head back and roared, causing the tens of thousands of swords around him to merge together into fourteen Immortal souls!

These souls, formed by the illusory Immortal meridians of the secret magic, could not measure up to the souls created, one soul per meridian, after corroborating one’s Dao and becoming Immortal.

To the true Immortal Chosen of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, an inhuman cultivator like Meng Hao was someone they simply couldn’t measure up to.

Zhao Yifan’s aura surged, and his sword descended. Behind him were 14 Immortal souls, who caused the descending sword blow to become a beam of light that illuminated the entire starry sky. Everyone was dazzled by the blinding, scintillating light.

Zhao Yifan’s most powerful sword attack!

Rumbling echoed out as the sword shot straight toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao’s desire to fight seethed as he caused all of his 123 Immortal meridians to rotate at full power. Immortal souls appeared behind him, which was the first time he had used such a power when battling the true Immortal Chosen.

He advanced, clenching his hand into a fist to deliver, as usual... one

punch!

It was as if, whatever enemies he faced, he would only use his most simple and direct method of attack. One punch!

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLE!

Massive rumbling filled the area in the starry sky where Meng Hao and Zhao Yifan met in battle. A massive hole tore open in the void. Blood sprayed out of Zhao Yifan's mouth. The light caused by his most powerful attack flickered and then shattered into fragments that spread out and transformed into a tempest.

Within that tempest, Zhao Yifan could be seen, smiling bitterly, coughing up consecutive mouthfuls of blood. He had lost, but his heart was not defeated. He now knew that he possessed the strength to bare his sword at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao emerged from within the tempest and then looked back at Zhao Yifan.

It was in that moment that Fan Dong'er surged into action, as did Li Ling'er. They attacked virtually at the same time. As for Fan Dong'er, the Ninth Sea materialized around her. A pulsing magical symbol appeared on her forehead. With each pulse, her Immortal meridians were increased by ten percent of their original power.

After it pulsed four times, she had added forty percent to her power, and her Immortal souls had appeared around her.

She waved her hand, causing the Ninth Sea to shoot forward, filled with countless Sea Dragons. It transformed into something that looked like a huge head, with a solitary horn sticking out of the forehead. It was a Sea Giant that instantly attempted to head-butt Meng Hao.

Its bright energy surged in all directions!

In another direction, Li Ling'er performed an incantation gesture, causing numerous trees to appear around her. Cracking sounds could be heard as the starry sky around her was transformed into a land mass. In the blink of an eye, more than ninety trees had appeared around her. She

continued to perform incantation gestures, then tapped on various areas of her body. More rumbling sounds could be heard as the number of trees increased to more than 130 in total.

Either of these young women alone could not exceed Zhao Yifan. However, their combined battle prowess was such that even Zhao Yifan's face would turn pale if he faced them in a fight.

They did not speak to Meng Hao, they simply attacked, in the exact moment in which the fight between Meng Hao and Zhao Yifan concluded.

Meng Hao turned his head, and his eyes shone with a brilliant light. He snorted coldly and caused the power of 123 Immortal meridians to explode out. All 33 Immortal souls appeared behind him, transforming into 33 Heavens, which emanated astonishing pressure!

The domineering sensation of the Immortal Realm Paragon suddenly radiated out.

"Think you can beat me? I'll just have to put you in your place!" He took a step forward and raised his right hand, not in a fist, but in a palm. He viciously thrust his palm forward, causing the 33 Heavens behind him to shake the starry sky as they transformed into a gigantic hand, which slammed into the Ninth Sea. Huge rumbling sounds filled the air as the seawater exploded. The Sea Dragons let out shrill cries, and the giant with its horned head shattered into pieces.

As its head exploded, Fan Dong'er's face fell, and she began to retreat. At the same time, Meng Hao advanced, causing the huge hand to rumble directly toward her.

Fan Dong'er's eyes shone with a bright red light as she performed an incantation gesture. Instantly, the corpse behind her looked up and began to emanate an explosive, murderous aura; it appeared to be on the brink of attacking Meng Hao.

In the same instant that the murderous aura radiated out from the corpse, Meng Hao called out in a towering, dignified voice: "Inky, stand down!"

The female corpse immediately bowed its head, the murderous aura vanished, and it even retreated by several dozen meters.

Fan Dong'er stared in shock, and her scalp went numb. In that moment, Meng Hao's attack closed in. Just when it was about to slam into her, though, he heard someone cough dryly in his ear.

That cough sounded ancient, and it obviously came from the throat of a very old woman. Meng Hao frowned, causing the hand to flip over. Instead of slamming directly into her like had just been about to, it slapped Fan Dong'er's rear end.

"Meng Hao, how dare you!!"

As the slapping sound rang out, Fan Dong'er let out a shriek, and her face fell. Her buttocks were now uneven, and intense pain filled her trembling body. In fact, it was the most intense pain she had ever experienced in her life.

Trembling, Fan Dong'er was now on the verge of collapsing unconscious. Blood sprayed from her mouth, and she staggered backward, her hatred for Meng Hao rising to near madness.

When Li Ling'er saw this, her expression flickered, and she suddenly stopped in place. Her face was ashen, as if she were suddenly thinking about something very frightening that had happened in the past. Glaring at Meng Hao, she backed up.

"Not quite as good as my wifey," said Meng Hao, turning to look at Li Ling'er.

Li Ling'er gnashed her teeth and performed a double-handed incantation gesture. Instantly, the 130 trees surrounding her exploded, transforming into a terrifying whirlwind which shot toward Meng Hao.

At the same time as the trees exploded, Li Ling'er spit out a mouthful of blood and retreated at high speed. Simultaneously, a cold harrumph could be heard coming from within the explosion.

"Get back here, wifey!" Simultaneously, an intense gravitational force latched onto Li Ling'er. Her face flickered as she was involuntarily sucked

backward towards the whirlwind.

Within the whirlwind, 33 Immortal souls swirled around Meng Hao. They instantly transformed into 33 Heavens, which bore the brunt of the whirlwind and the exploding trees. He advanced, energy surging, backed by the powerful windstorm.

In the blink of an eye, Li Ling'er was swept up, and was being pulled close to Meng Hao. She gritted her teeth and spun to face him. At the same time, she performed a double-handed incantation gesture, after which the shocking image of a tree leaf appeared on her forehead.

The tree leaf was emerald green, and as soon as it appeared, a strong life force appeared in Li Ling'er. A magic bottle materialized in front of her, which she grabbed and threw toward Meng Hao.

"I knew you would use that move," he said coolly, waving his sleeve. The 33 Immortal souls behind him emanated shocking power, and the magic bottle instantly shattered.

Blood sprayed from Li Ling'er's mouth as she tumbled backward. In that same instant, Meng Hao advanced forward, spanning the distance between the two of them to appear right next to Li Ling'er. Then, he raised his hand high into the air, and, as Li Ling'er's pupils shrank with fury blazing in her eyes, smacked his palm down onto her rear end.

This was... the third time!

Li Ling'er let out a miserable shriek as pain exploded throughout her body. Her face went deathly white, and she was sent spinning, her body shaking. She looked back at Meng Hao with intense killing intent.

"Meng Hao!"

"Ah, what a familiar feeling," he said with a cool smile. With that, he paid no further attention to Li Ling'er. He had not even used his full power when fighting Zhao Yifan. Rather, he was taking his time to get accustomed to the various degrees of battle prowess that he could display. You could say that the true Immortal Chosen had come to fight him successively. However, this was the optimal situation for Meng Hao; he

needed continuous fights like this in order to adapt to his newfound battle prowess in the quickest possible manner.

Now, he had mostly finished adapting, and his eyes glittered brightly as he looked out into the starry sky.

At this point, all of the spectators out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were looking at Meng Hao and his power. This overt display of might caused everyone in the Immortal Realm to be filled with fear, and even caused members of the Ancient Realm to stare in shock.

“He’s the... number one figure in the Immortal Realm!”

“He’s just fighting the true Immortal Chosen to hone himself! It’s like when a mighty sword is forged from divine metal that still need to be sharpened after it comes out of the fire!”

“It’s possible that the only person who could be his match is, not someone from his generation, but... someone from the Elder generation!” Discussions raged in all corners of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Meng Hao hovered there in the starry sky, looking around calmly as he said, “Chosen! Are there any of you left who dare to fight me! If not, then I have some personal matters to handle.” He looked down at Planet East Victory, and his eyes flickered coldly.

If you followed his line of sight, you would see... that he was looking at Fang Wei, who hovered in midair above Planet East Victory.

Fang Wei opened his eyes slowly and calmly.

In the instant that they looked at each other, the rumbling sound of teleportation portals could be heard, as three more portals appeared.

Meng Hao frowned, and originally planned to ignore them and head directly toward Planet East Victory. However, he suddenly stopped in his tracks and turned toward one of the teleportation portals. His eyes suddenly widened, and an expression of disbelief appeared on his face.

“You’re not dead?”

A young man walked out of the teleportation portal. He was tall and

slender, and although he did not look physically imposing, anyone who looked at him would be able to tell that his fleshly body was terrifyingly powerful.

“No, I’m still alive,” he said.

Something that looked like a star rotated slowly on his forehead. However, if you examined it closely, you would see that there were several other stars in the same position, that seemed to have been sealed, causing them to flicker somewhere between illusory and corporeal.

It was...

Wang Tengfei!!

Almost in the same moment that Wang Tengfei appeared, a figure emerged from the second teleportation portal. She floated out, surrounded by a boundless mist of Karma.

Within the mist, her cold and emotionless eyes pierced out toward Meng Hao, intense to the extreme.

She was... Ji Yin!

The last teleportation portal opened, and another young man appeared. He looked like a scholar, and even carried a bamboo scroll in his hand. He looked over at Meng Hao and smiled in a way that seemed sincere, but actually contained boundless coldness. There even seemed to be a hint of jealousy buried deep inside.

“Elder Brother Meng, I am Zhou Shui, from the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite. My master commanded me to come here. Please give me some face by fighting with me for a bit.”

“Taking turns to fight me?” replied Meng Hao. “When will this end?! Do you really think that I won’t dare to kill people with all of your sects looking on!?” His eyes gleamed with intense coldness, but his words were even colder.

# Chapter 990: Gods vs. Immortals!

Meng Hao glanced over the three. Although he was a little taken aback by the appearance of Wang Tengfei, he still chose to speak in this manner.

The faces of these three newcomers didn't flicker in the slightest in response to his words. As for Ji Yin, her face wasn't even visible.

"Elder Brother Meng, my master is from the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite—" said Zhou Shui. He was smiling on the surface, but his heart was as cold as ice. Before he could finish speaking Meng Hao looked directly at him, his expression frigid.

He said nothing further, but instead, advanced. 33 Immortal souls exploded with power, and his 123 meridians rotated, surging with shocking power. Instantly, he was in front of Zhou Shui, launching a punch.

Zhou Shui's eyes flickered with coldness as he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand. His energy rose up, causing ripples to spread out as power equivalent to 140 meridians exploded out. His Immortal souls appeared, and at the same time, a spark of flame appeared directly above his head, from within which emanated the sounds of scriptures being chanted. Instantly, Zhou Shui's aura exceeded that of Zhao Yifan.

He quickly finished his incantation gesture and then formed his hand into a palm, which he thrust out to meet Meng Hao's blow.

A boom could be heard, and Zhou Shui's face fell as his entire arm vibrated. At the same time, he unleashed the full power of his cultivation base, after which a ripping sound could be heard, and the chanting of the scriptures grew louder.

"Nine Cycles Daoist Magic!" As soon as Zhou Shui's voice rang out, the chanting of scriptures surged, transforming into strange ripples that reduced the power of Meng Hao's attack, nine times in a row. After the ninth reduction, the attack was easily countered by Zhou Shui's palm.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he looked over at Zhou Shui.

“Fellow Daoist Meng, is this the full power of the Immortal Realm Paragon’s attack?” he asked coolly. However, deep inside, he was shocked. Seeing what he had just seen, and feeling it personally, left him greatly shaken.

“If that’s all you have, then it’s time to see how you like one of my attacks.” With that, rumbling emanated out of his body as... 99 Immortal dragons suddenly appeared around him.

The Immortal dragons roared, causing strange colors to flash in the air, and the Heavens to tremble. This scene caused widespread shock among the cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

“99 meridians!!”

“The Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite has profound resources hidden away! I can’t believe they have a disciple with 99 meridians!!”

“That’s only one short of 100. It looks like Zhou Shui isn’t too happy to be fighting Meng Hao. If the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite had given HIM that meridian, he would have 100 right now!!”

Zhou Shui’s eyes flickered as the 99 dragons roared, and his Immortal souls appeared. Even as the ripples of the Nine Cycles Daoist Magic spread out, he took a deep breath, and what he absorbed was the qi of Heaven and Earth from the starry sky.

After taking one breath, his Immortal meridians thrummed. Immediately, the number of dragons exceeded 99. Soon there were 100, 108, 115, 127, 136... until there were a total of 148!

This scene caused everyone to be extremely shocked. Zhou Shui’s aura roared into the sky, and within his eyes appeared a cold light as he looked toward Meng Hao and barked, “One Breath, Slay Three Corpses!”

Zhou Shui’s eyes flickered with killing intent. He knew that he had no hope of actually defeating Meng Hao, but he still hoped to be able to fight him to a draw, and prove that he was the true Chosen of the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

As he spoke, his aura surged out, and his Immortal meridians caused

strands of Immortal qi to form a huge stream of white smoke that shot toward Meng Hao.

It was only one stream, but it emanated a terrifying aura that seemed capable of slaughtering anyone in the Immortal Realm. Everyone in the Ninth Mountain and Sea was astonished.

The only person whose expression was the same as ever was Meng Hao. His mouth twisted into a cold smile as his 123 Immortal meridians caused 123 portions of Immortal power to merge together into his fist. This could be counted as a secret magic that resulted from corroborating the Dao on his own to reach true Immortality.

Yet again, one punch rocketed through the air.

When Meng Hao fought earlier, it might have seemed like he was using all of the power that his Immortal meridians could provide. However, he had actually employed no skill whatsoever in his attacks, and had relied only on brute force to crush everyone.

Now was the first time that he was using a true Immortal secret magic, unifying the power of his Immortal meridians into one force... to deliver a true Immortal Realm attack.

The one punch generated a massive wind that caused the stars to flicker. Shockingly, numerous Soul Lamps appeared around Meng Hao, causing Zhou Shui to gape in shock. His eyes went wide, and even as the astonishment washed through him, Meng Hao's fist slammed into the stream of smoke.

A huge boom rang out as the smoke instantly collapsed. Blood sprayed from Zhou Shui's mouth, and his body very nearly exploded. Shouting loudly, he utilized the Nine Cycles Daoist Magic, but even after reducing the power nine times, he was still sent flying backward like a kite with its string cut. Blood spurted out all over his body until he was soaked. His aura was vastly weakened, and the flame of his life force flickered on the verge of being extinguished.

"You...." he said. His face was pale, his scalp numb. Vibrations surged through his body to the point where all his Immortal meridians were

about to collapse. In the midst of his astonishment, a look of terror appeared on his face, and without hesitation, he produced a jade slip which he crushed, teleporting him away immediately.

The Ninth Mountain and Sea went deathly quiet as everyone mentally replayed the image of Meng Hao's attack just now.

"That's... the power of the Immortal Realm Paragon?!?!"

"Strong! So strong!! That strike was comparable to the Ancient Realm!!"

"That attack... even someone in the Ancient Realm with one extinguished soul lamp... might have a hard time fighting back against it!!"

The Ninth Mountain and Sea was shaken as Meng Hao turned his head to face Wang Tengfei and Ji Yin.

Ji Yin's face was grim, and she backed up toward the teleportation portal. Apparently, she had decided not to attack Meng Hao. It was as if she had realized that Meng Hao, as of this moment, was someone others in the Immortal Realm couldn't beat.

Fan Dong'er's eyes were wide, and Li Ling'er's face was ashen. Zhao Yifan was smiling bitterly, and as for Taiyang Zi and the rest of the group of ten or so from earlier, all of them were sighing.

They now knew that earlier... Meng Hao was only fighting to get used to his cultivation base. Therefore, he let them attack him. Now... he had no need for such a thing, and if they tried to attack him again, the result would be very different.

Meng Hao was someone not to be provoked!

Wang Tengfei looked up, and the stars on his forehead flickered as he advanced by a pace.

"Meng Hao, I won't waste your time. One punch. Just one punch!" His eyes flickered with obsession. He had been waiting for this moment for a long time, and in fact, there was no one except the two of them who truly knew all the details of their past.

Meng Hao looked at Wang Tengfei. He was still a bit shocked to find out

that Wang Tengfei was alive, especially considering that he had personally seen him die at the hands of the 10th Wang Clan Patriarch.

Well aware of what Meng Hao was wondering, Wang Tengfei offered an explanation, his voice soft: "The 10th Patriarch helped me."

Meng Hao looked back at Wang Tengfei silently, and his heart filled with complicated thoughts as he recalled how they had first met all those years ago. It was very likely that Wang Tengfei had seen the Flying Rain-Dragon that had become one of his Immortal meridians.

"Very well!" he said, nodding.

Wang Tengfei's eyes gleamed with the desire to fight. As he looked at Meng Hao, his energy began to rise up. He possessed no secret magic, and the number of Immortal meridians that he had opened could not be considered especially outstanding in the current age.

However, he did have access to some of the deep resources built up by the 10th Wang Clan Patriarch. He also had Meng Hao's Perfect Foundation, as well as the bloodline power he had acquired in the moment of becoming a true Immortal.

That bloodline power was something shocking even in the Wang Clan because it was so rare!

It was the power of Gods!

In the Wang Clan, this bloodline power of Wang Tengfei was the power of a God!

What he walked, was not the path of Immortal Ascension. What he walked... was the path of Godly Ascension!

This battle was a fight between Gods and Immortals!

Wang Tengfei threw his head back and roared. Cracking sounds emanated out from his body, and in the blink of an eye.... he grew until he was 30 meters tall. 300 meters tall. 3,000 meters.... He looked completely and utterly shocking to anyone who saw him, and the area around him instantly filled with rifts and fissures.

He continued to grow larger with maddening speed, and within a few breaths of time, he was directly in front of Meng Hao, a giant fully 6,000 meters tall!

The sudden appearance of this giant filled Meng Hao's mind with shock, and caused him to think back to the vision he had experienced in the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple, in which he saw a giant. That giant actually looked very similar to Wang Tengfei! 1

Both had thick, tough skin covered with magical symbols, and both had stars on their foreheads. The main difference was that the giant in his vision had more stars than Wang Tengfei!

All cultivators who saw what was happening were shocked. Wang Tengfei roared, causing a chaotic, primeval sensation to fill the hearts of anyone who heard it. His right hand clenched into a fist and he punched out toward Meng Hao.

That fist flew like a gigantic meteor, heading toward Meng Hao with shocking speed.

Meng Hao's expression was one of concentration. He was aware that there was something special about the Wang Clan. He had been able tell that from the strange divine ability used by Wang Mu earlier. In fact, he had even experienced other strange Wang Clan divine abilities on Planet South Heaven. However, he had never imagined that the Wang Clan blood contained... the power of Gods!

"Just exactly how powerful was the first Patriarch of the Wang Clan?" he thought. He had no idea what era that Wang Clan Patriarch lived in, but he was now intensely curious about him. However, now was not the time to ponder such matters. He clenched his right hand tightly into a fist, causing popping sounds to ring out. Then, he unleashed his secret magic, causing his 123 Immortal meridians to fuse with the power of his true Immortal fleshly body.

It was as if his fleshly body was now 123 times more powerful, and as he punched out, the starry sky around him was shattered. The power contained in his fist caused the hearts of all observing cultivators to

quiver.

In the blink of an eye, Meng Hao flew up to make contact with Wang Tengfei's fist. When the two slammed into each other, a huge boom echoed out. Stars collapsed and the Heavens went dark. A massive, ringlike shockwave spread out in all directions.

Blood sprayed out of Wang Tengfei's mouth as he was sent staggering backward. His enormous body rapidly shrank in size, and after falling back more than ten paces, he was back to normal, his face ashen. He coughed up a few more mouthfuls of blood, and his right arm appeared to be completely shattered. He looked up at Meng Hao.

"I'm definitely going to defeat you one day!" he said, sounding incredibly determined. With that, he turned, coughed up another mouthful of blood, and then transformed into a beam of light which shot off into the distance.

Meng Hao stood there silently. He slowly lowered his fist to find that his arm was trembling. Wang Tengfei's staggering power contained a domineering force that could destroy everything. Meng Hao looked down at the back of his hand, and the wound that had been left behind there.

This was actually the first time he had been injured while fighting these Chosen.

"Godly power...." he thought, eyes flickering with anticipation.

"Now, it's time to take care of that personal matter...." He looked down toward Planet East Victory, and Fang Wei, who hovered there in midair. Once again, their gazes locked.

"Fang Wei!" he said softly, shooting toward Planet East Victory under the shocked gazes of everyone present!

"Fang Hao!" Fang Wei's eyes gleamed with obsession as he began to fly up to meet Meng Hao.

Down on the ground below, Fang Xiushan's eyes flickered with a venomous, murderous intent. Fang Wei's grandfather narrowed his eyes. Within his hand was a jade slip that he was prepared to crush at a

moment's notice.

However, he seemed to be hesitating. Once he crushed that jade slip... there would be no turning back.

\*

1. The visions of the giant were in chapters 807, 812, and 819.

# Chapter 991: Fang Wei vs. Meng Hao!

Meng Hao had been waiting for this battle for a very long time. However, to him, it was not some destined battle of fate, but rather, merely something that would happen in the course of getting his possessions back.

In contrast, it WAS a destined battle of fate for Fang Wei.

To him, a defeat in this fight would be unacceptable. To lose would mean to lose everything, and he could not allow something like that to happen. He could not allow someone to trample upon his position as Chosen within the clan.

What most people saw was only the glory that he had achieved. They did not see how hard he had worked, earnestly and obsessively, after Meng Hao had left the clan. When Meng Hao left, it was as if a giant mountain had been removed, giving him the qualifications to rise to prominence. He had assumed that from then on, his entire life would be like that. He had devoted himself to rising to prominence, sparing no cost to reach his goal, which was... to lead his clan to greater glory.

He would propagate the name of the Fang Clan, and eventually, years later, would become a clan Patriarch.

However, all of that... changed as soon as Meng Hao returned.

"Why did you have to come back!?" The killing intent in Fang Wei's eyes surged, and he roared. He then soared up like a shooting star, performing a double-handed incantation gesture. The aura of reincarnation roiled out from him, as did the will of the Yellow Springs. He bit the tip of his tongue and spit out a mouthful of blood mist, then began to mumble a bizarre incantation.

This was a secret magic!

A Fang Clan secret magic!

As the chant echoed out, intense loud popping sounds rang out from Fang Wei as his 98 Immortal meridians soared out and transformed into

98 Immortal dragons, which then shot toward the incoming Meng Hao.

Also, thanks to the unleashing of his secret magic, over 40 additional illusory dragons joined them. Added together, there were a total of 143. Heaven and Earth shook violently.

When being used by Fang Wei, the Fang Clan secret magic increased his Immortal meridians by roughly fifty percent!

Behind him, Immortal souls appeared, a total of 14, causing Fang Wei's energy to soar madly.

Everything that was happening shook the hearts of the cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. They watched Fang Wei, and sighed inwardly. The members of the Fang Clan looked on silently.

"First there was Fang Hao and now there's Fang Wei.... On the one hand, for a clan to produce two Chosen like this is a sign of future prosperity. On the other hand, if things aren't handled with care, it will inevitably lead to one of those glorious figures being extinguished."

"Prince Wei of the Fang Clan was their number one Chosen in the past. He opened 98 meridians and shook all of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Ah, what a pity...."

"He had one less meridian than Zhou Shui; the difference between them wasn't much. If Meng Hao hadn't come along... then those two, along with Zhao Yifan, would be the only three qualified to compete over the status of being the most powerful blazing sun among the Chosen!"

As the cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea sighed, Fang Wei's cultivation base exploded with power, and he shot toward Meng Hao through the air above Planet East Victory. By this point, they were only about 300 meters apart.

The two of them looked like meteors, one streaking down from the sky, the other shooting up from the ground. Everyone in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, including the cultivators of Planet East Victory, and the members of the Fang Clan, watched with trembling hearts. Fang Wei and Meng Hao were moving so fast... that sonic booms turned into massive, circular

ripples that spread out in all directions!

Then, they slammed into each other!

A huge boom shook everything, sending innumerable ripples out in all directions, causing even the Heavens to tremble. A massive wind sprang up, causing Heaven and Earth to dim, and the heavenly bodies to shake.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he launched a single punch backed with the explosive power of 123 Immortal meridians. A huge boom could be heard, and blood sprayed out of Fang Wei's mouth as he was sent rocketing back down toward the ground.

It seemed as if victory had been determined in the first exchange. Meng Hao was now an Immortal Realm Paragon, someone who wasn't even fazed by the combined might of ten true Immortal Chosen. They had ended up having destiny forcibly attached to them with A Writ of Karma. Furthermore, he had forced even Fan Dong'er and Li Ling'er into retreat, had outshined Zhao Yifan, and had forced Zhou Shui from the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite, with his 99 meridians, to flee in fear.

Fang Wei was also a Chosen. But the things Meng Hao was able to do... he simply could not!

To the audience in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, there was just too much of a disparity. In fact, it would be most accurate to say that this battle was really a formality... a formality to officially replace a Chosen of the Fang Clan.

All of the members of the Fang Clan realized this, and therefore, no one interfered. They all just watched silently.

As Fang Wei fell down to the ground, many people sighed inwardly.

Meng Hao looked down at Fang Wei and slowly said, "Fang Wei, you're no match for me. Now take out what belongs to me and return it. Everything is over now. If you don't comply... then I won't hold back any further."

Fang Wei's body was soaked in blood. His hair was in disarray, and his expression was one of complete viciousness. After falling down about

3,000 meters, he suddenly came to a stop and looked up, his eyes bloodshot. Glaring at Meng Hao, he began to laugh uproariously.

“Fang Hao, did you really think our battle would end so quickly?! Do you really think you can win so easily?” Shrill laughter rang out as Fang Wei suddenly flew back up into the air, his eyes filled with madness and veins of blood.

“If you want to take back what belongs to you, then you should show some skill and take them away!

“Unfortunately... I’m not going to give you that chance!” Fang Wei’s laughter was filled with insanity as it echoed out. His right hand shot up, and he slapped his palm down onto his forehead.

When that happened, a bizarre aura suddenly exploded out of him, causing his energy to skyrocket. His face twisted viciously, and blue veins popped out as he let out a piercing shriek.

Meng Hao’s eyes widened as he realized that this aura coming off of Fang Wei was actually very familiar, causing him to look at Fang Wei with a complex expression.

“My Nirvana Fruits, huh...?” he murmured. All of the cultivators in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, especially the Chosen, were gradually shifting their focus to Fang Wei, and they looked shocked.

The members of the Fang Clan looked on blankly. They could clearly see the newly added illusory dragons around Fang Wei, which increased the total number of Immortal dragons to a total of 143!

However, that wasn’t what shocked them. They gasped as they saw Fang Wei’s energy increasing rapidly. He roared, as... shockingly... more Immortal meridians appeared!

One by one, illusory Immortal meridians popped out. 153. 163. 173....

In conjunction with the appearance of these new Immortal meridians, Fang Wei’s energy soared, drawing excited discussion from all the onlookers. Zhao Yifan and all the other Chosen were dumbstruck.

“What secret magic is Fang Wei using? I can’t believe... I can’t believe he’s so strong!!”

“Inconceivable! His Immortal meridians were already increased by nearly fifty percent thanks to some secret magic. That, I can understand. But I never could have imagined that he would have another method to add even more Immortal meridians! They might be illusory, but... they’re still Immortal meridians!”

“Could it be that he used some forbidden magic? But... I’ve never heard of any forbidden magic that could unleash such unbelievable power!” The Ninth Mountain and Sea was in a total uproar.

As for the Dao Realm Patriarchs from the other sects, they were filled with complete shock.

The Fang Clan Earth Patriarch’s face flickered with complex emotions. He understood exactly what was happening, and sighed silently.

Underneath the ancestral mansion, the six other Patriarchs looked on silently. Only the Seventh Patriarch frowned and glanced over at the Sixth Patriarch with a dark look.

On the surface of Planet East Victory, Fang Xiushan looked very excited at what was happening. All of a sudden, hope flickered in his heart.

“Perhaps Wei’er can actually win!!”

Even Fang Wei’s grandfather looked on with glittering eyes. He loosened his grip on the jade slip he had been about to crush. That was his last resort, and he didn’t want to enact the plan too early.

After all, complete preparations hadn’t been made.

Meng Hao didn’t say anything as the aura of his own Nirvana Fruits grew stronger and stronger on Fang Wei. Although the onlookers didn’t understand exactly what was happening, he understood.

“Fang Hao!” Fang Wei let out a mighty roar, and booming sounds could be heard as his clothes were shredded. His body began to expand, and in the blink of an eye he was much taller. His qi and blood surged like that of

an Immortal Divinity.

The Immortal dragons around him increased rapidly. Rumbling sounds could be heard as, shockingly, more Immortal meridians appeared! 183 was not the limit! Suddenly, there were 192!

That was an increase of 49 meridians!

Everyone was now paying rapt attention to what was happening!

"He had 98 of his own meridians, used a secret magic to add 45, and then unleashed a Daoist magic similar to a forbidden magic that actually added more Immortal meridians, equivalent to half of his original maximum!"

"192 meridians! This Fang Wei... is completely Heaven-defying!!"

"I thought this battle was going to be a simple formality. I never imagine that Fang Wei would perform so shockingly. Just... how is he doing this!?!?" The Ninth Mountain and Sea was astir, and the Chosen up in the starry sky watched with wide eyes and gaping mouths. First there was Meng Hao becoming their complete and utter superior. Then something happened that they never could have imagined. Fang Wei... performed similarly shocking feats!

"I can't believe... that all the destiny of the Ninth Mountain and Sea has ended up in the hands of the Fang Clan!"

"Two blazing suns, both from a single clan!"

"It's too bad these two don't get along!"

As of this moment, the Dao Realm Patriarchs of the various sects and clans looked on with glittering eyes. Meng Hao's appearance on the scene left them moved. Fang Wei's dazzling performance caused them to suddenly have a new understanding of the nature of the Fang Clan.

"The Fang Clan is incredible!"

"Either Fang Hao or Fang Wei could become the blazing sun of this generation!"

"This battle between these two members of the Junior generation... is

turning out to be quite interesting.”

The Ninth Mountain and Sea was in a stir as Fang Wei slowly looked up at Meng Hao. He was now much stronger than before, and fully nine meters tall. His energy surged; he was surrounded by 192 roaring Immortal dragons, and was backed by 19 Immortal souls.

“Like I said, Fang Hao, our battle won’t end so easily!” He looked at Meng Hao, and his eyes brimmed with both madness and the desire to fight. Killing intent swirled as he began to advance. Heaven and Earth trembled, the wind screamed, and the heavenly bodies went dim.

“One Thought Reincarnation Incantation!” Fang Wei extended both hands and then waved them out, causing an enormous, shocking vortex to appear in front of him.

The vortex was both black and white, and as it spun, it emanated a shocking aura of reincarnation!!

Meng Hao’s eyes gleamed coldly, and his gaze fell onto Fang Wei like a sharp sword.

“You’re using what belongs to me, and yet... you’re still too weak.”

# Chapter 992: I Haven't Lost Yet!

When Fang Wei heard Meng Hao's calm voice, he threw his head back and laughed. The laughter became shrill as he performed an incantation gesture, causing the black and white vortex to rotate rapidly as it began to move toward Meng Hao.

In the blink of an eye, the vortex was nearly 300 meters wide. It was spinning so fast that the black and white now merged together into a gray color, like that of death. However, within that death, there was also life.

That... was reincarnation!

Fang Wei exploded with all of the power his Immortal meridians could muster; 192 meridians became 192 Immortal dragons, which roared as they soared around the vortex, adding to its power and making it spin even faster.

Fang Wei's 19 Immortal souls stepped forward and seemed to hurl the vortex toward Meng Hao.

The vortex grew even larger, until it was 3,000 meters wide!

Rumbling filled the air, causing all observing cultivators in the Ninth Mountain and Sea to shake with astonishment. The members of the Fang Clan were completely shocked!

As of this moment, Fang Wei... was far more powerful than anyone could have imagined, so much so that many people were starting to question their assessment of him.

"Immortal Realm Paragon Meng Hao... might lose?"

Meng Hao hovered in midair, looking at the incoming reincarnation vortex. His eyes shone with a cold light. The fact that Fang Wei could unleash 192 Immortal meridians wasn't too surprising to him.

What surprised him was that the Nirvana Fruit inside his own bag of holding could increase his own Immortal meridians by double, whereas the Nirvana Fruits Fang Wei had could only increase his by half.

“Are my Nirvana Fruits just not as good as the first generation Patriarch’s?” he thought. “Or is it just that they aren’t perfectly suitable for Fang Wei?” Not quite willing to accept that his fruits were inferior, Meng Hao snorted coldly and then slowly raised his hand. Inside of him, 123 Immortal meridians began to thrum as he unleashed his own secret magic, fusing them all together into... the Blood Demon Grand Magic!

A blood-colored head suddenly ripped apart the air to appear in front of Meng Hao’s palm. Its expression was vicious, and it emanated a bright red glow in all directions. It did not roar or snarl, but it let out an indescribable pressure that rippled out in all directions.

This Immortal meridian Blood Demon head was incredibly powerful. Right now... the power of 123 Immortal meridians exploded out, causing the Blood Demon head to rapidly grow. In the blink of an eye, it was 3,000 meters tall!

Its growth was incredibly shocking, and in fact, the Blood Demon head rapidly reached a critical point where it transformed from illusory into corporeal!

Its expression was vicious; it had a single long horn, and blood-colored skin. Furthermore, anyone who looked at it suddenly experienced a pressure that made their own blood feel like it was suddenly going out of control. This feeling spread through all of Planet East Victory.

This Blood Demon head was so powerful that not even Blood Demon himself, when he was in the same realm in years past, would have been able to create such a powerful instance of this magical art.

The fact that Meng Hao was an Immortal Realm Paragon meant that any of his magical techniques and divine abilities could be bolstered to 123 times their original power by his secret magic! That made them... the most powerful Immortal abilities in the entire Realm!

Behind him were 33 shocking Immortal souls. 33 Heavens descended, spreading out in all directions, causing colorful winds to swirl around him.

As all of this happened, time seemed to slow down. The cultivators on Planet East Victory stopped breathing, and the observers in the Ninth

Mountain and Sea stared unblinking.

Fang Wei screamed as he went all out, sending his reincarnation vortex closer and closer to Meng Hao.

Meng Hao pushed out with his hand, causing the Blood Demon head to suddenly roar, a sound which transformed into the only sound that existed in all Heaven and Earth.

ROOOAARRRR!!

The deafening sound was accompanied by surging red light as the Blood Demon head shot toward the reincarnation vortex.

3,000 meters. 1,500 meters. 900 meters...

In the blink of an eye, the reincarnation vortex and the Blood Demon head slammed into each other.

When they did, the land below seemed to roll like waves. Booms echoed out as mountain peaks crumbled and rivers exploded. Even the seas on the planet began to boil.

It was the same everywhere. Lands quaked, mountains shook. Even the Heavens seemed to be on the verge of being torn asunder. A huge rift appeared up above that rapidly spread out.

If you looked closely, that rift was actually a roiling shockwave which spread out with astonishing speed.

The reincarnation vortex was instantly shattered into countless fragments that exploded out in all directions. The Blood Demon head's smashing attack caused the 192 Immortal dragons to let out miserable roars and begin to shatter into pieces.

In addition, the 19 Immortal souls also crumbled, one by one!

When the vortex exploded, a blast of reincarnation aura spread out, transforming into something like a mouth that... began to swallow up the Blood Demon head.

In that moment, Meng Hao's eyes went wide and he waved a finger through the air.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as the Blood Demon fell apart, transforming into 123 Blood Dragons, which roared and shredded the enormous mouth to pieces. As they flew out, they looked dimmer than before, but not a single one was destroyed. They then began to swirl around Meng Hao, causing him to look like both a Blood Demon and a Blood Immortal!

It was a simple, direct, single attack!

Meng Hao's strength as an Immortal Realm Paragon caused everyone in the Ninth Mountain and Sea to be shaken, and the images they were watching were firmly planted in their memories.

The wind screamed, and rumbling sounds filled the air as Meng Hao hovered there, looking down at Fang Wei. He sighed inwardly.

Meng Hao could see that Fang Wei was actually not a fundamentally evil person. He was simply too proud, and could not accept defeat.

"Hand them over!" said Meng Hao calmly as he descended toward Fang Wei, causing Heaven and Earth to rumble. Instead, Fang Wei threw his head back and laughed.

Blood spurted out of him, and he trembled as he staggered backward. His skin was in shreds, and he almost looked like nothing more than a mass of blood.

Even as he laughed shrilly, a gleam of obsession could be seen in his eyes.

"I haven't lost yet!!" he cried. "I'm Fang Wei. How could I ever lose!?!?"

He stood there shaking, a ferocious expression on his face as he laughed shrilly. People saw his glory, but they didn't see the endless days and nights he had spent maniacally focused on cultivation. While other people had been feasting and chatting with family, he had been out fighting and killing! When other people had been falling in love, he had remained in his secluded meditation. He had endured all the loneliness, and the relentless passage of time!

He only had one goal, and that was to surpass everyone else! He wanted

to be the number one Chosen of the Ninth Mountain and Sea! He didn't care about what his father did to others in the sect, nor what plans his grandfather had.

The only thing he cared about was becoming the future Patriarch of the Fang Clan!

Because of that, when his grandfather had offered him the two Nirvana Fruits, he hadn't hesitated for a second. He had immediately chosen to absorb them. Because of that, when he kneeled, trembling, in front of the Sixth Patriarch, Fang Wei had chosen to agree to his demands.

He knew that his father had sent people to kill Meng Hao on his way back to the sect, but he didn't care. To him, Meng Hao was nothing more than a brief memory.

This was true even though the Nirvana Fruits he was using belonged to Meng Hao; he simply didn't care. After all, he had always viewed himself as the true number one Chosen in the clan. Everything... already belonged to him.

"Fang Hao, if I lose, then of course you can have what belongs to you. But as of this moment, I haven't lost yet!" As he looked up at Meng Hao, the blood that covered his face made him look even more vicious than before.

He threw his back and laughed, and suddenly, the aura of reincarnation vanished, to be replaced... by a towering will of death!

This was the One Thought Yellow Springs Dao!

It was the second most powerful signature Daoist magic of the Fang Clan! Only the One Thought Stellar Transformation was more powerful!

To cultivate this magic, one must first die. Then, in death, they had to find a sliver of life. That sliver of life would prevent the soul from dying, and cause the body to merge into the gap between life and death, then form an actual Dao of life and death.

As the aura exploded out, Meng Hao's eyes flickered. Down below, Fang Xiushan's expression was cruel as he glared at Meng Hao. Fang Wei's

current condition filled him with pain, but his desire to see Meng Hao dead was even stronger. In fact, if he had the chance... he would directly kill him.

"Killing him will bring a conclusion to everything. Even if I descend into the underworld because of it, I'm willing!" Fang Xiushan gnashed his teeth as he continued to conceal the killing intent deep within his eyes.

Fang Wei's energy was soaring higher and higher. He let out a cry of intense pain, but the more painful it got, the more his eyes shone with obsession, and the more his aura rose explosively.

192 Immortal dragons soared around him, slashing at the air. It was as this point that dumbfounded expressions began to appear on the faces of the cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. That was because, shockingly, more Immortal dragons began to appear around Fang Wei!!

199. 207. 213....

One Immortal dragon after another appeared, shredding the air, causing the stars to tremble. Numerous rifts were torn into the sky around Fang Wei.

221. 234.... His Immortal meridians were exploding out!

It kept going until... he reached 241 meridians!!

By this time the cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea were mind-blown. They were speechless, and the members of the Fang Clan were in a complete uproar. In the ancestral mansion, the Grand Elder looked blankly up into the sky at Fang Wei and Meng Hao, and he let out a long sigh.

"He... he actually added 49 more meridians!"

"If there was no Meng Hao, Fang Wei... would definitely be the Immortal Realm Paragon of the Ninth Mountain and Sea!"

"Fang Wei is equally as inhuman as Meng Hao! Just what method is he using to do that?!?"

"241 meridians! There isn't anybody who's done that in ANY generation

of Immortals in the Ninth Mountain and Sea! According to the legends, the actual complete limit is 330 meridians, but that's nothing more than a legend!"

The Chosen out in the starry sky felt their minds spinning. They were filled with bitterness that the Fang Clan... could have Meng Hao and Fang Wei. Never would any of the cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea be able to forget the Fang Clan!

The Fang Clan Earth Patriarch hovered silently out in the starry sky. He wanted to step in and intervene, but hesitated. He knew that if he did do something to stop what was happening... he might lose both of them.

"Hao'er... did you come back to the clan for the sole purpose of Immortal Ascension? To prove yourself?" The Earth Patriarch's eyes gleamed with a profound light.

"If so, then will those people who have been lurking hidden within the clan... finally reveal themselves?"

# Chapter 993: Upheaval in the Fang Clan!

Fang Wei's voice echoed out across the lands of Planet East Victory. He had 241 Immortal meridians, and 241 Immortal dragons swirled through the air around him, emitting roars which caused winds to surge, and the land to quake.

"Fang Hao!!" Fang Wei looked up, his expression fierce and filled with madness. His body continued to grow, making him taller and more muscular.

Shockingly, 24 Immortal souls towered up behind him, transforming into 24 Heavens, emitting a pressure that caused anyone who felt it to pant.

Gradually, they began to resist Meng Hao's 33 Heavens!

This was something that had never occurred before, and was something no other Chosen could possibly accomplish. Only Fang Wei could succeed in contending against Meng Hao's 33 Heavens!

33 Heavens was the limit for Immortals, and marked one as Paragon of the Realm. However, as of this moment, an intensely powerful energy rose up from Fang Wei.

Meng Hao's eyes widened as the aura of the Nirvana Fruits Fang Wei possessed grew even stronger. In fact, when he closed his eyes, he could clearly sense the two Nirvana Fruits in operation in Fang Wei's forehead.

At the same time, far beneath the Fang Clan's ancestral mansion, the Seventh Patriarch, along with the other six Patriarchs, saw Fang Wei exploding with 241 meridians. The Seventh Patriarch was clearly shocked, and deep within the Sixth Patriarch's eyes, impossible for anyone to detect, was a glint of joy and excitement.

"He's grown up...." murmured the Sixth Patriarch, who then closed his eyes.

Up above, Fang Wei's energy surged, and 241 Immortal dragons spun through the air with him as their nucleus. Behind him, 24 Heavens caused

everything to shake. Fang Wei's aura roared up. From the look of it, he was in no way ready to back down in front of Meng Hao.

After all, Meng Hao only had 123 Immortal dragons, and although each one was enormous, they were outnumbered by almost double.

However, when you looked at Meng Hao's 33 Immortal souls, and his 33 Heavens, he was just as glorious as before.

"Fang Hao, this is my most powerful state. If I'm defeated now, then I'll return what belongs to you. As payment for using them, I'll give you my life as well!" Fang Wei's eyes shone with madness as he stared at Meng Hao, and yet, within that madness was a glint of obsession.

Meng Hao's expression grew grave as he looked back at Fang Wei and nodded.

As of this moment, Meng Hao couldn't make himself hate Fang Wei anymore. The current situation was just the result of the outworkings of chance.

"Let's fight!!" Fang Wei roared, throwing his head back and laughing. He stepped forward, performing an incantation gesture with his right hand, causing a river to appear in front of him!

The river was yellow, and within it floated innumerable dead souls that let out vicious howls. In the blink of an eye, the river became matchlessly large. It was... the Yellow Springs!

This was the quintessence of the One Thought Yellow Springs Dao, a manifestation of the Yellow Springs, as if it represented the underworld and its power. A mysterious ripple spread out from the Yellow Springs, shaking all the Heavens, and rocking the minds of the cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Even more shocking was that there wasn't just a single manifestation of the Yellow Springs. Instead... there were 241! They materialized in front of Fang Wei, causing everything to shake and tremble. Even the sky above was tinged yellow in color.

Trembling, veins popping out on his face, Fang Wei waved his hands,

then pointed toward Meng Hao and roared.

Rumbling filled the air as the 241 Yellow Springs shot toward Meng Hao. In the blink of an eye, they filled the entire area and seemed to be on the verge of completely overwhelming him.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered as he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and waved. His Immortal meridians rumbled, causing his 123 Immortal meridians to manifest outside of him, not as Immortal dragons, but instead, as chains of mountains!

Chains of Immortal mountains!

123 chains of mountains descended, each one of which caused Heaven and Earth to tremble. Meng Hao seemed to be surrounded by boundless mountains, all of which emanated Immortal might as they spread out in all directions. Meng Hao stood in the very center of all the mountains, as if he was their Lord!

He faced the Yellow Springs, extending his right hand and pointing. Rumbling could be heard as all of the mountains began to rotate in the air and then shoot toward the Yellow Springs.

The Yellow Springs might be mysterious, but the mountains could suppress them!

Chains of mountains crushed down onto the Yellow Springs!

The cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea felt their chests tightening as they watched.

Rumbling rose up as the mountain chains crushed down. The Yellow Springs rose up, and the two forces slammed into each other. Each and every one of the Yellow Springs were destroyed, and all of the mountains collapsed. The scene playing out in the sky right now was like a painting. A massive, destructive explosion caused everything to shake, and even caused cracks to appear in the sky.

This was no longer the power of Immortals. Not even cultivators of the Ancient Realm who had extinguished one Soul Lamp could unleash divine abilities with this level of power. The cultivators of the Ninth Mountain

and Sea were completely shaken.

Blood sprayed from Fang Wei's mouth, and his expression was vicious as he performed a double-handed incantation gesture and then raised his arms above him, towards the sky. Eyes filled with madness, he roared, "Yellow Springs Dao!"

As his words rang out, the shattered Yellow Springs all began to swirl back towards him. Vast amounts of yellow waters transformed into a rain which flowed towards him from all directions. Then, in the blink of an eye, the water began to reform.

It turned into a majestic.... authentic Yellow Springs that caused Heaven and Earth to grow dim!!

This was not the Yellow Springs of the Fourth Mountain, this was a manifestation of Fang Wei's Immortal meridians, merged together to form his own Yellow Springs. The aura of reincarnation appeared, causing all the lands to quake, and the Heavens to grow dark.

As of now, the only thing that seemed to exist... was his matchlessly majestic Yellow Springs, fully 30,000 meters long!

If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal, but shockingly, 24 Immortal souls also appeared within the Yellow Springs. They might be Fang Wei's Immortal souls, but as of this moment... they were Underworld Judges of the Yellow Springs!

24 Underworld Judges, each one of which had a peak Immortal Realm cultivation base. The Yellow Springs was their weapon, and as for Fang Wei... he was like their Yama King of Hell! 1

"With the Dao of the Yellow Springs, I will eradicate the soul of the Immortal Realm Paragon!" Fang Wei cried madly, waving his hand out to point at Meng Hao.

As of this moment, all of the cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea gasped. The crowds on Planet East Victory were astonished, and the faces of the members of the Fang Clan flickered.

"Fang Wei is so incredibly powerful!!"

“So that is the One Thought Yellow Springs Dao!?”

“No wonder it’s referred to as a signature Daoist magic! It materializes the Yellow Springs, establishes Underworld Judges, and manifests a Yama King.... Does that mean that the Fang Clan’s first generation Patriarch actually had some connection to the Fourth Mountain?”

“This is a true battle of pinnacles, which I didn’t think I would be able to see because Meng Hao was just too powerful! I never thought that I would be able to bear witness to something like this!”

The Ninth Mountain and Sea was shaken. Back on Planet South Heaven, Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li were getting nervous. All of Meng Hao’s friends were also starting to feel anxious. Meanwhile, out in the starry sky was the boat that no one could see. The egotistical young man from earlier was also watching the scene with wide eyes.

For the first time, a sense of deadly crisis welled up inside of Meng Hao. He looked at Fang Wei, and had to admit... that he truly was a Chosen.

The Yellow Springs rumbled toward Meng Hao, and the 24 Immortal soul Underworld Judges inside of it all launched attacks.

Meng Hao took a deep breath. The gleam in his eyes that was the desire to do battle grew stronger, stronger than it had ever been when he had faced against the previous true Immortal Chosen.

Within his right eye, a starstone appeared, which transformed into starlight that floated out above Meng Hao’s palm. In the blink of an eye, starlight had covered his entire body.

“One Thought, Stellar Transformation!!” Meng Hao said. If you discounted his Demon Sealing Hexing Magics and the Paragon Bridge, One Thought Stellar Transformation was the most powerful divine ability that he could unleash!

Boundless starlight covered Meng Hao, making it look like he wasn’t a cultivator any more. As the boundless light spread out, as the starstone surrounded him, he transformed into a planet!

This was no ordinary planetary Daoist magic, this was formed from

Meng Hao's true Immortal secret magic, the unleashing of 123 times the power of One Thought Stellar Transformation!

This planet was 3,000 meters wide, and when it appeared, all cultivators who were watching thought back to how they had seen the same magic before, when Meng Hao used it to batter open the Door of Immortality.

“One Thought Stellar Transformation!!” The members of the Fang Clan were all dumbfounded.

At the same time, Meng Hao in planet-form shot toward the Yellow Springs. All eyes were on him... as he made the decisive final move in the fight!

The planet rumbled as it moved at top speed. Fang Wei was going all out with all of the battle prowess his cultivation base could muster, not holding back the tiniest scrap.

“DIE!!” Fang Wei roared as Yellow Springs and Meng Hao in planet-form slammed into each other.

A huge boom exploded out over all of Planet East Victory. The sky shattered and the ground boomed. Fang Wei let out a howl of defiance as his Yellow Springs were shattered. His Immortal souls exploded, incapable of standing up to the enormous planet.

Even still, the planet began to shrink rapidly, growing weaker. In the end, though, it still completely ripped the Yellow Springs into shreds, and crushed all 24 of the Immortal souls.

By the time the planet reached Fang Wei, it had shrunk down to only about 3 meters wide. It smashed into him, whereupon the cracking sound of shattering bones could be heard.

Blood sprayed from Fang Wei’s mouth, and he began to laugh bitterly as he rocketed down toward the ground. He slammed into a mountain peak, which immediately collapsed into rubble.

Fang Wei’s bitter laughter continued to ring through the air as blood oozed out of his mouth. His chest had been crushed to a pulp, his internal organs were shattered, and his soul was crushed. His life was nearing its

end.

“Come on... take back what belongs to you!” said Fang Wei, using his last breath to cause his words to echo out into the air. The planet faded away, and Meng Hao appeared. As he looked down silently at Fang Wei, everyone from the Ninth Mountain and Sea also quieted down.

“It’s over,” Meng Hao said, sighing. He continued to move forward, surrounded by silence. Just when he was about to reach Fang Wei, Fang Xiushan looked up, and killing intent boiled in his eyes. Suddenly, he performed a minor teleportation. His Ancient Realm cultivation base exploded out with the terrifying power of two extinguished Soul Lamps.

“Fang Hao, it’s time to die!!” Fang Xiushan’s hand shot out, and everything shook. However, even as he closed in, Meng Hao’s 19th Uncle flickered to appear between the two of them. Instantly, the two of them began to fight!

“Beat it!” roared Fang Xiushan, unleashing his most powerful divine ability.

At the same time, Fang Wei’s grandfather was about to make a move, when the Grand Elder took a step forward and looked at him.

“Don’t do anything stupid,” said the Grand Elder. He sighed. “As for Wei’er, I will–”

Fang Wei’s grandfather didn’t speak. Before the Grand Elder could even finish speaking, he grinned. A look of determination appeared in his eyes as he suddenly lifted the jade slip and crushed it!

“That person was right. The Fang Clan needs to change a bit...” he said. “I’m only one part of the plan, responsible for the clan Elders. However, if I make a move, then everyone else... will have no choice but to act, whether they want to or not!” Fang Wei’s grandfather suddenly cocked his head, and his cultivation base exploded with power!

The Grand Elder gaped in surprise, and his eyes filled with disbelief and shock. That was because in the moment that Fang Wei’s grandfather crushed the jade slip, vicious expressions instantly appeared on the faces

of roughly forty percent of the Fang Clan's Elders. Shockingly, they instantly began to attack their fellow clan members!

The Fang Clan was facing a huge upheaval!

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1. In the original Chinese, there is a slight difference in the characters Er Gen uses for the “Yama Kings” but the reference is clear, so instead of making a variation on “Yama King” I’ll just stick with the original.

More information here:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yama\\_\(East\\_Asia\)#Yama\\_in\\_Chinese.2C\\_](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yama_(East_Asia)#Yama_in_Chinese.2C_)

# Chapter 994: The Clan in Chaos!

The Fang Clan was in complete chaos!!

The observing cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea gaped in shock at the scene. There had been absolutely no indications that anything like this was going to happen. All of a sudden... the entire Fang Clan was thrown into disarray!

At the same time, a glowing shield suddenly appeared outside of Planet East Victory, completely covering the whole planet, sealing it off!

The entire area was now isolated, allowing no one to either enter or leave without express authorization!

Sealed inside was not only everyone from Planet East Victory, but also the Chosen from the various sects and clans. They were stuck in the starry sky, looking on in shock as the turmoil played out down on the planet below.

Miserable screams rang out from the Fang Clan, along with roars of rage and exclamations of shock.

“You... Fang Zheyi, you...”

“Fang Haitao, what are you doing? You’re my Clan Uncle!!”

“This is rebellion!! Are you really betraying the clan!?!?”

Shocking booms echoed out as roughly forty percent of the Elders in the Fang Clan’s ancestral mansion went from watching the fight between Meng Hao and Fang Wei, to suddenly attacking their fellow clan Elders. They immediately unleashed their most vicious divine abilities.

Some Elders were punched from behind; they tumbled forward, blood spurting out all over, after which they spun around with roars of rage.

Others were attacked by multiple opponents, and before they could even react, were shredded into bits. Heads flew, and their eyes filled with looks of disbelief as they were killed in body and soul.

There were some who managed to evade the deadly attacks. Their

cultivation bases surged with power as they turned, trembling with rage and disbelief to face the traitors.

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLE!

In the blink of an eye, serious injuries were inflicted on more than half of the sixty percent of the Elders who were still loyal to the clan. There were many who, because they didn't have a chance to defend themselves, were immediately slaughtered!

Blood flowed throughout the ancestral mansion.

That was the situation with the Elders. However, the chaos was not limited to them. Almost all of the members of Fang Wei's bloodline spun, vicious expressions on their faces as they attacked their fellow clan members. Divine abilities exploded out as formerly neutral clan bloodlines also turned traitor. They instantly spun, employing vicious attacks on other clan members. Miserable shrieks could be heard as the entire clan was shaken, and countless individuals died.

Blood oozed out of the corners of Fang Xiangshan's mouth. She fell back in retreat as one of her Clan Sisters pursued her with killing intent.

Then there was Fang Yunyi. He was not among the traitors, so he looked around blankly as his entire world changed.

Fang Xi coughed up a mouthful of blood as he was injured by one of the other direct bloodline clan members. Fang Xi's expression was one of rage and indignation.

"Fang Shui you...."

The young man who had injured him looked on silently for a moment before attacking again, and the two began to fight bitterly.

Scenes of chaos and fighting immediately broke out in numerous locations throughout the Fang Clan.

The ground quaked, and buildings toppled. As the chaos spread, the ground ran red with blood. In the blink of an eye, countless individuals died.

Up in the sky, 19th Uncle and Fang Xiushan were fighting. Originally, 19th Uncle had only been attempting to block Fang Xiushan's way, but now his eyes were bloodshot, and he roared with rage as he unleashed numerous deadly attacks.

Fang Xiushan threw his head back and laughed harshly, his expression one of insanity.

Everything was happening too quickly. It was in almost the exact same moment that Fang Xiushan's way was blocked by 19th Uncle that Fang Wei's grandfather had crushed the jade slip, and that forty percent group of Elders attacked. Up in midair, Meng Hao closed in on Fang Wei, reached out, and was about to touch his forehead.

However, it was in that same moment that, all of a sudden, an unprecedeted sense of danger exploded within his heart. That sense of danger wasn't coming from Fang Xiushan, nor from Fang Wei's grandfather, nor from the upheavals taking place in the clan. Instead, it was coming from... Fang Wei himself!

In that instant, a look of struggle suddenly appeared in Fang Wei's eyes, and suddenly, four pupils appeared, two in each eye. Then, those pupils merged together.

No one could see it happening except for Meng Hao. As soon as he sensed what was going on, he shot backward. In almost the same moment, rumbling sounds could be heard as the area where had just been standing collapsed. The incredible power of ten extinguished Soul Lamps of the Ancient Realm suddenly erupted out.

If Meng Hao had hesitated for even one breath of time, he would definitely be dead already.

At the same time, a hand suddenly emerged from the shattered sky, which then tapped down on Fang Wei's forehead.

"Awaken, my doppelgänger!" said an ancient voice. At the same time, Fang Wei's body trembled, and he let out a piercing shriek.

Up in midair, Meng Hao's scalp went numb, and his expression was one

of surprise. It was at this point that he turned his head and saw all of the chaos that was raging in the Fang Clan.

He saw countless people dying. He saw clan members attacking each other. The sight caused his mind to spin... he was completely unprepared for something like this to happen, and his heart was suddenly trembling violently.

Everywhere he looked, corpses were piling up. Up in the sky, Fang Clan Elders were fighting deadly battles. Down below, all of the members of the clan were going mad. The smell of blood filled the air, so concentrated that there was no way of dispersing it in the slightest.

Meng Hao almost couldn't believe the sudden and violent scene he was witnessing.

Planet East Victory was completely shaken, including the Medicine Immortal Sect. Even Patriarch Reliance was stunned.

If the powers on Planet East Victory were surprised, there was no need to even mention the reaction of the various sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. When they saw what was unfolding, their minds reeled, and their eyes went wide with shock.

"This... this is impossible!"

"This is the Fang Clan! One of the Four Great Clans! How could they be suddenly struck with upheaval like this!?"

"The Fang Clan... the Fang Clan is descending into civil war!!"

"There was a clan conspiracy! It looks like almost half of the entire clan is rebelling!!"

"Something like this is going to rock the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea!!" People were gasping in shock throughout all of the various sects and clans. They couldn't believe what they were seeing, that there were rivers of blood flowing through the Fang Clan!

"Fang Heshan, what are you doing!?!?" the Grand Elder roared at Fang Wei's grandfather. "You know that the Patriarchs are in the ancestral

mansion in secluded meditation. An uproar like this will definitely wake them up! If even one of them comes out, he will condemn you to eternal damnation!" The Grand Elder's hair was in disarray, he was trembling, and his eyes were bloodshot as if overcome with madness. His heart was filled with pain. This was the ancestral mansion of the Fang Clan, a place where the Fang Clan had built up resources for countless years. And yet, all of a sudden, it was thrown into revolt.

Throughout the long history of the Fang Clan, there had never been a large-scale rebellion like this. The entire matter set the Grand Elder's blood boiling with rage as he shot toward Fang Heshan.

Fang Wei's grandfather Fang Heshan hovered in midair, his face grim as he looked around at the chaos. He saw everything happening in the clan, and saw the countless clan members dying. He could smell the odor of freshly spilt blood.

"What am I doing?" he asked. "This wasn't my decision. It was as that certain person said, the Fang Clan truly needs to change. And as for those Patriarchs you just mentioned...?" Fang Heshan suddenly began to laugh in a very strange fashion, and didn't say anything further. Instead, he advanced forward and began to fight with the Grand Elder.

When the Grand Elder saw the expression on Fang Heshan's face, his heart began to pound.

Massive booms filled the air, causing everything to tremble. Buildings in numerous locations around the Fang Clan ancestral mansion collapsed. Craters appeared in the ground as fierce slaughtering was carried out on a grand scale.

At the same time that the massive upheavals struck the Fang Clan, deep in the recesses of the ancestral mansion, in the stony cavern, the Seventh Patriarch shot to his feet, his expression one of both fury and disbelief. His entire body was trembling, and he was just about to stamp his foot and fly out of the cavern to put a stop to everything.

It wasn't just him. In that same moment, other Patriarchs also rose to their feet. However, in that same moment...

All of a sudden, the Sixth Patriarch extended his hand and pushed forward, causing a powerful ripple to explode out. It instantly turned into a shield that prevented anyone from leaving.

“Ladies and gentleman, I really don’t want to attack you,” he said slowly. “Please wait here a moment until matters are settled up above. Then I’ll let you leave peacefully.”

“Old Sixth!” cried the Seventh Patriarch, spinning in place, his eyes blazing with killing intent. In this critical moment of chaos, they needed to act without hesitation, to resolve the matter instantly. Even the slightest slowness in their actions would lead to even more serious losses on the part of the clan.

Even as he spoke, he rushed toward the Sixth Patriarch.

“Do you really think that you can block all of us by yourself? Are you really going to rely only on Fang Heshan out there to lead the rebellion to success?” The Seventh Patriarch’s rage boiled into the Heavens, and killing intent exploded out of him. However, even as he began to move forward, a snide smile appeared on the Sixth Patriarch’s face.

“Fang Heshan of the Junior generation is just one pawn in the entire plan. As for here, do you really think I’m acting alone, Old Seventh?”

Even as the words left the Sixth Patriarch’s mouth, the Seventh Patriarch’s face twisted in shock as the Fourth Patriarch suddenly turned, eyes glittering with killing intent, and then attacked the Fifth Patriarch.

“Fourth Brother, what are you doing?!” Shocking booms could be heard. Everything happened too quickly. The Fifth Patriarch had a profound cultivation base, so despite being attacked unexpectedly, he was still able to rise to his feet.

At the same time, the Second Patriarch began to laugh coldly. Even as he stepped forward, the Third Patriarch’s face turned pale.

The Second Patriarch was actually the second only to the Fang Clan’s Earth Patriarch in terms of power. He stepped forward, his aura murderous, causing the other Patriarchs’ hearts to tremble.

Of the six people present, three had turned traitor!

Shocking booms could be heard as decisive attacks were unleashed in the stony cavern. Everything trembled, and blood sprayed out of Seventh Patriarch's mouth. His expression was one of pain as he cried, "Why?!"

These six had sat in secluded meditation together for many years, and although they weren't blood brothers, in terms of their relationship with each other, it was almost as if they were. They even called each other Brother.

The person to answer the Seventh Patriarch was the most powerful among the people present, the Second Patriarch.

"Old Seventh, I really don't want to lie to you. All of this is for the sake of... the legacy of Lord Li!"

A drastic upheaval was shaking the Fang Clan. Booms filled the air, and all of Planet East Victory was shaking. The Dao Realm experts of the various sects and clans looked on with expressions of shock.

Meanwhile, the Earth Patriarch was in the starry sky outside of Planet East Victory. When he saw what was happening, a very strange look appeared in his eyes, although no one would be able to detect it. He saw the clan members dying down on the planet below, and knew that regardless of who won or lost, the clan would suffer huge losses in terms of their overall power. Even still, his eye continued to flicker almost as if he were sneering at the betraying clan members!

His body flickered as he prepared to charge back down to Planet East Victory. Considering the level of his cultivation base, anyone could tell that once he got there, it didn't matter how many rebels there were, they would be completely powerless beneath him!

However, in the moment that he seemed about to make his move, a cold smile appeared on the face of a certain person. This person had come to fight Meng Hao, but after watching his succession of victories against the other Chosen, had held back. Now, that person suddenly flickered into place directly in front of the Fang Clan Earth Patriarch.

She was the only person among all of the other Chosen... who hadn't fought Meng Hao!

She was none other than the person who everyone knew to be Ji Yin!!

However, she actually wasn't Ji Yin!

# Chapter 995: The Ji Clan Makes a Move!

Everyone was watching as Ji Yin emerged. Ripples of the Dao Realm suddenly began to spread out from her body. That was Essence aura, meaning that the ripples emanating out from her were the most powerful possible in the starry sky!

The instant the ripples surged out, Fan Dong'er and the other Chosen felt their faces fill with shock. Regardless of who it was, none of them could ever have imagined that Ji Yin... was not actually the real Ji Yin!

This was something that neither the Fang Clan Earth Patriarch nor Meng Hao had been able to pick up clues about.

It was with complete stealth and silence that a Dao Realm expert suddenly appeared outside of Planet East Victory. It was something that caused all members of all the sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea to be filled with shock.

The Dao Realm Patriarchs were all murmuring to themselves.

“The only person who could pull this off without us noticing is... one of the Ji Clan’s five almighty Dao Realm experts... Ji Xiufang!” 1

“The Ji Clan is incredible....”

The Earth Patriarch’s face went cold as he stared at Ji Yin and, one word at a time, said, “Ji Xiufang!”

Ji Yin began to laugh softly as the boundless Karma which surrounded her began to dissipate to reveal the face of a middle-aged woman.

“Fang Shoudao! Long time no see! With me here, you won’t be going anywhere.” This woman was exactly who the Fang Clan’s Earth Patriarch had just mentioned, Ji Xiufang!!

The Earth Patriarch looked at her silently, his eyes flickering with killing intent. Without any further ado, he shot forward, and the two of them began to fight.

Booms filled the air, and the starry sky shattered as the Dao Realm battle

shook mountains and seas.

In almost the same moment as the two of them attacked each other, three people suddenly appeared outside the layered sealing shield that covered Planet East Victory. Each one of these people emanated ripples of the Dao Realm, and as they sat down cross-legged, rumbling sounds emanated out from them. Their cultivation bases exploded out as they reinforced the shield, causing it to become even stronger.

Now, Planet East Victory was completely and thoroughly sealed inside.

The cultivators of the other sects and clans saw what was happening, and great waves of shock battered their hearts.

This made it absolutely clear that... the upheavals in the Fang Clan had something to do with the Ji Clan!! Furthermore, the Ji Clan had already made it obvious... that they were determined to come out victorious!

The Ninth Mountain and Sea was in shock. The Dao Realm Patriarchs of the various sects and clans felt coldness rising up within their hearts. That coldness was caused by the mass chaos in the Fang Clan, from the sudden appearance of Ji Xiufang, and from the three almighty Dao Realm experts outside of the shield.

Up until moments ago, nobody had noticed anything unusual about Ji Yin, and had overlooked the fact that she was the only one among the various Chosen who hadn't fought Meng Hao.

Now that they thought about what had happened, they realized that the plan had been carried out without a hitch. If Ji Xiufang weren't there, Fang Shoudao would have quickly resolved the chaos in the Fang Clan.

When the Dao Realm Patriarchs realized this, the chill in their hearts grew even stronger.

"The Ji Clan... is on the attack! They've sent four Dao Realm experts to deal with the Fang Clan. If you ignore Lord Ji, who is as old as the Heavens, and doesn't even count as a cultivator any more, the Ji Clan has a total of five Dao Realm experts!"

"The Ji Clan's Dao focuses on Karma. They haven't made a move for a

long time. According to the legends, when they do, they always make sure they're one step ahead of everyone else!"

"One step ahead.... For example, the six Ancient Realm experts of the Fang Clan. The Ji Clan already made arrangements for infighting among them, making it impossible for them to participate in the larger chaos. Then there's Fang Shoudao, who they arranged Ji Xiufang to take care of!"

"In that case, what are those three almighty Dao Realm experts doing with that shield?" As the Dao Realm Patriarchs considered the matter quickly, their faces flickered, and they looked in the direction of the Three Great Daoist Societies.

All of a sudden, powerful ripples spread out from that direction, and rumbling sounds could be heard as figures emerged, as if the sects were mobilizing!

The Three Great Daoist Societies were going to jump into the fray!

Obviously, they would not be helping the Ji Clan. They... would prevent the Ji Clan from exterminating the Fang Clan!

At this point, everyone realized the purpose of the sealing shield around Planet East Victory. It was obviously there to prevent the Three Great Daoist Societies, or anyone else, from easily interfering. That meant that the presence of Ji Xiufang was even more important than ever!

Even as the energy of the Three Great Daoist Societies built up and the figures shot out, that energy suddenly began to fade. At the same time, the figures who had emerged suddenly returned to their respective sects.

The only people who were aware of this development were the Dao Realm Patriarchs, whose faces flickered as they observed.

Very quickly, their eyes went wide, and their minds began to spin.

In the Nine Seas God World, just as various figures had been preparing to go to Planet East Victory to aid the Fang Clan, roughly ten percent of the disciples in their sect suddenly... turned traitor!

There were even clan Elders who participated, ensuring that the Nine

Seas God World was thrown into instant chaos.

A similar scene played out in the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto, as well as the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite. This change was incredibly sudden, and was apparently the result of years of planning that been kept secret, all for the purpose of exploding out in this moment.

Booms echoed out from the Three Great Daoist Societies. They were only small waves of internal disorder that wouldn't last for very long. No major changes would occur, but their primary goal was... to buy time!

The whole point was to delay the Three Great Daoist Societies so that they couldn't provide help for Planet East Victory!

When you added in the sealing shield, that delay could prove to be fatal.

In addition, there was an unspoken warning contained within this sudden turn of events.

The coldness in the hearts of the Dao Realm Patriarchs grew even stronger than before.

"The Fang Clan... is going to be eradicated! I just still find it hard to believe that a clan like that could be overthrown just like this."

"The Ji Clan doesn't attack lightly. And when they do attack... they strike like lightning! This is a catastrophe for the Fang Clan.... Unfortunately, I'm worried that the Ji Clan's machinations still haven't been fully revealed."

"The fact that the Ji Clan was even willing to activate their sleeper cells in the Three Great Daoist Societies shows how much they want to overthrow the Fang Clan.... But in the end, what is the real purpose?" The Dao Realm Patriarchs remained silent, but their eyes flickered with growing rage, fury that the Ji Clan had even included the Chosen of all the other clans in their machinations.

After all, the entire group of Chosen was now trapped just outside of Planet East Victory!

However, it didn't matter how angry the Dao Realm Patriarchs got; they had existed for many years, and weren't stupid. They knew that no matter

how strong the Ji Clan was, they didn't want to make enemies of all of the sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Unless the Chosen did something on their own to seek death, they would be safe. As long as they didn't interfere, then once the battle was over, they would be free to leave.

Miserable screams rang out in the Fang Clan ancestral mansion. The bitter fighting between clan members caused the entire area to be soaked with blood. As every moment passed, more members of the Fang Clan died.

The internal chaos caused the areas on Planet East Victory outside of the Fang Clan to become deathly silent.

Buildings collapsed. Structures toppled. The ground quaked. Meng Hao hovered in midair, looking out at what was happening, and his eyes were shot with blood. Although he didn't feel very much loyalty to the Fang Clan, to see all the clan members being slaughtered, to see Fang Xi in such danger, caused a murderous aura to explode out from within him.

He slapped his bag of holding to produce the Lightning Cauldron. Lightning danced as Meng Hao suddenly vanished, switching places with a clan member near Fang Xi.

That moment of transposition was the exact moment in which Fang Xi was facing imminent danger from one of the other direct bloodline clan members. Even as the man reached his finger out toward Fang Xi's forehead, Meng Hao advanced without hesitation and waved his sleeve.

A boom could be heard as the power of 123 Immortal meridians exploded out. A terrifying force smashed into the clan member who was attacking Fang Xi. Blood sprayed from his mouth for a moment before he exploded into chunks of gore.

Fang Xi laughed bitterly as he looked around, a sense of profound powerlessness filling him.

Meng Hao looked silently at Fang Xi for a moment. Then his eyes filled with determination as he began to summon the terracotta soldier. By now, even he had come to the conclusion that the clan rebellion must have been influenced by outside powers. Otherwise, the Patriarch-level experts

in the clan would have appeared by now.

He had no idea about the fighting going on deep beneath the ancestral mansion, nor about the Dao Realm battle occurring out in the starry sky. But Meng Hao didn't need to know about those things to understand that... something very bad was happening in the clan.

However, in the moment that he called to the terracotta soldier, he also felt a powerful obstructing force spreading out to cover all of Planet East Victory. It greatly slowed the opening of the ancestral land, making it impossible for the terracotta soldier to come to him immediately.

His eyes flickered with killing intent. Continuing to call to the terracotta soldier, he turned and began to slaughter his way into the crowd. He was not at the level of an Ancient Realm expert, so he only attacked opponents of the Immortal Realm, and he did so like lightning. 33 Heavens descended, and the explosive power of the Immortal Realm exploded out. Any and all traitorous clan members of the Immortal Realm who met him let out bloodcurdling screams as they were destroyed in body and soul.

He was like an Immortal of death. Rumbling sounds could be heard as he waved his right finger, causing the forehead of a stage seven Immortal clan member to explode. Then he spun, and his cold gaze flickered toward two clan members who were speeding toward him in attack, whose hearts suddenly seized in terror. Before they could even react, Meng Hao shot past them, and their heads flew into the air.

A complicated expression appeared on Fang Yunyi's face as Meng Hao slaughtered the clan member who had been fighting him, then sped past. Meng Hao had just saved his life, and now all he could do was smile bitterly.

Explosions rang out as savage fighting was carried out.

Meng Hao was very adept at killing. On Planet South Heaven, he had killed many, many people.

Furthermore, he was extremely familiar with chaotic battlegrounds. The Lightning Cauldron flickered, and he vanished amidst rumbling sounds. In that moment, a nearby traitorous clan member appeared in the spot he

had just occupied, which was then blasted by a combined attack of five Ancient Realm experts who had been trying to kill Meng Hao.

With the Lightning Cauldron, it was very difficult for anybody to pin him down in the melee. In a very short period of time, dozens of traitorous clan members died by his hand.

This was the first time he had shown such brutal savagery in the clan, and as a result, the surrounding clan members looked at Meng Hao with astonishment.

That was not even to mention the cultivators in the other sects and clans out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Despite the sealing shield, everyone could still use various methods to see what was happening in the Fang Clan. That was something the Ji Clan didn't prevent from happening. They wanted the bitter tragedy playing out in the Fang Clan to be visible to all, as a threat.

However, it was at this point that massive rumbling sounds could be heard from the area in which Fang Wei had slammed into the mountain. Terrifying ripples began to spread out as Fang Wei's pupils returned to normal.

The terrifying ripples then vanished. He slowly rose up from amidst the rubble, then threw his head back and laughed.

"This doppelgänger is excellent. Wonderful.... It feels great to be so young... Although it's weak and cannot wield the power of the Ancient Realm... this body has incredible potential. After completely fusing in the future, and turning this into my true self, the peak of the Ancient Realm will no longer be my limit!

"Fang Wei, as a descendant of mine in the clan, since you're giving me your body, I'll help you fulfil one of your aspirations." As of this moment, strange ripples began to undulate out from Fang Wei. He flew into the air, spotted Meng Hao fighting in the crowds in the ancestral mansion, and began to fly toward him.

Killing intent flickered in his eyes as he closed in.

In that moment, Meng Hao sensed a prick of danger in his mind. He looked up, and his gaze locked with Fang Wei's.

Or perhaps it would be more correct to say that his gaze locked with... the Sixth Patriarch!

\*

1. Ji Xiufang's name in Chinese is 季秀芳 jì xiù fāng. Xiu means "beautiful," and Fang means "fragrant." This is clearly a woman's name.

# Chapter 996: The Battle Resumes!

Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li stood in the Tower of Tang on Planet South Heaven, watching the upheaval in the Fang Clan on Planet East Victory. Meng Li's eyes were wide, and she trembled as she clutched Fang Xiufeng's arm.

"You knew this was going to happen, didn't you!?" she said, her eyes filled with anxiety at the sight of Meng Hao being in such danger. What she was worried about wasn't the destruction of the Fang Clan, she was worried about her son's safety.

Fang Xiufeng looked at the images and slowly nodded.

"You have to trust me, and you have to trust Hao'er. Everything will be over shortly." Fang Xiufeng said softly. His fatherly love was not the type that showed on the outside like Ke Yunhai's. His love was kept buried deep in his heart. He was Meng Hao's father, and would rather sustain injuries himself than allow his son to be hurt in the least.

However, everything that was happening... had to happen.

On Planet East Victory, Fang Wei's and Meng Hao's gazes locked, and an intangible rumbling sound filled Meng Hao's mind. It was as if everything in the world vanished, and the only things left behind were the two of them.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered with killing intent. There was no way he could have predicted that events would turn out this way. He could do nothing about the dramatic events playing out in the Fang Clan, and in fact, deep in his heart, he was somewhat at a loss.

A sinister grin could be seen on Fang Wei's face as he flew through the air like a shooting star, heading directly toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao took a deep breath, crushing the dazed feeling he felt in his heart. His battle with Fang Wei was not over. His Nirvana Fruits had not been returned. In that case... it was time to continue the battle!

Eyes flashing with killing intent, he flew into the air. The two of them

pierced through the crowds like meteors, rapidly closing in on each other.

Their speed was incredible, causing everything to shake. Even though all the other members of the Fang Clan were locked in battle, they all turned to look at Meng Hao and Fang Wei. The cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea also stared at the two figures as they closed in on each other.

When they slammed into each other in midair, a shocking boom echoed out in all directions, causing the air to shatter and wild colors to flash in the sky.

Meng Hao attacked with the full explosive force of his 123 meridians. 33 Heavens rumbled, and numerous mountain chains appeared. One Blood Demon head after another roared, causing Heaven and Earth to shake, and wild winds to scream.

Fang Wei performed an incantation gesture, causing a divine ability to materialize. Statues appeared, formed of reincarnation, the Yellow Springs, and some other magical technique that Meng Hao was unfamiliar with. The statues circled around Meng Hao, unleashing ceaseless attacks.

Meng Hao frowned. The terrifying Ancient Realm ripples that had been emanating out of Fang Wei had vanished. However, Meng Hao could sense that Fang Wei was much more powerful than he had been earlier.

Gradually, Meng Hao began to sense ripples inside of Fang Wei that filled him with a sense of danger.

"He's not Fang Wei!" he thought, his eyes flickering with a cold light.

Fang Wei was bursting with an energy far more powerful than before. The One Thought Yellow Springs Dao was unleashed once again, but it was different this time. Rumbling sounds could be heard as the Yellow Springs swept out, directly attacking Meng Hao in midair.

A huge boom rattled out as over a hundred moves were exchanged in a very short time.

"That's all you can do?" asked Fang Wei, his voice coldly sinister. "This is the Immortal Realm Paragon!?" He performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, causing the Yellow Springs to turn into something like a

dragon that lunged toward Meng Hao with gaping maw.

Meng Hao's expression darkened, but he said nothing. His hand extended as a divine ability was unleashed.

At the same time, Fang Wei's 241 Immortal meridians appeared. However... apparently, he wasn't finished! Suddenly... more Immortal meridians appeared!

251. 261. 271....

Massive rumbling filled the air as Fang Wei's aura exploded up, to the astonishment of the observing cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

"Fang Wei... his Immortal meridians, they're... still increasing!!"

"Unbelievable, this... what's going on!?" The cultivators were dumbstruck, but the Dao Realm Patriarchs merely frowned; they were starting to piece together pictures of what was happening.

"He's possessed...."

"After he became Immortal, he was possessed, although not perfectly. It couldn't be; after all, people who can reach the absolute pinnacle of Immortal meridians are not commonplace in the Nine Mountains and Seas. The only possibility is that someone placed a Dao seed in Fang Wei, as a sort of a gamble. That person would be betting that as Fang Wei grew up, he would have a chance at success."

"That's of secondary importance. The main requirement would be that they were of the same bloodline. Furthermore, they would both have to have cultivated the same technique. Even more important than that is that they would both have to have a drop of blood from the legendary Underworld Clan!" The Dao Realm Patriarchs maintained their silence as they looked at Fang Wei with looks of curiosity and shock.

Back on Planet East Victory, Fang Wei's Immortal meridians continued to erupt!

281. 291. 300!!

Massive rumbling sounds echoed out. Meng Hao's eyes widened as Fang

Wei's Immortal meridians just continued to increase. Although he was shocked, it didn't cause him to hesitate at all. He waved his hand, transforming into a golden roc. At the same time, numerous mountain chains crushed down toward Fang Wei, whose laughter rang out as his energy continued to soar.

Killing intent flickered in Meng Hao's eyes. A domineering air surged out, and his Immortal Realm Paragon cultivation base exploded with power. The starstone vanished from his left eye, transforming into starlight in his palm. It covered his body as the One Thought Stellar Transformation manifested, transforming him into an enormous planet that shot toward Fang Wei.

Piercing whistling sounds could be heard as the planet emitted shocking pressure over everything. Rocks shattered and then rose up into the air, and the nearby battling cultivators were pushed away by a powerful force.

The 3,000-meter planetary asteroid shot through the air, filled with incredible power. In the blink of an eye, it was upon Fang Wei.

However, in that instant, Fang Wei's eyes glittered with arrogance. Extending both of his hands, he roared.

Suddenly, his Immortal meridians burst with power as even more were added!

310 meridians!

320 meridians!

The entire Ninth Mountain and Sea rumbled. All of the members of the Fang Clan were shocked. All attention was focused on Fang Wei.

330 meridians!!

Shockingly, 330 Immortal meridians had appeared in Fang Wei, which was the complete pinnacle for an Immortal who had not corroborated the Dao on his own. When the 330 Immortal meridians appeared, 33 Immortal souls also descended behind Fang Wei. It was just the same as Meng Hao... 33 Heavens!

“DIE!” he roared, extending both hands toward the incoming planet. As he pushed out, his 330 Immortal meridians transformed into 330 Yellow Springs, which then combined into one. In addition, his 33 Immortal souls were no longer Underworld Judges, but rather, Yama Kings! An indescribable pressure that was the ultimate pinnacle of the Immortal Realm radiated out from him.

Massive rumbling shook all of Planet East Victory as two peak Immortals began to fight. When they slammed into each other, a huge boom rattled out. Cracking sounds could be heard as the planet began to fall to pieces, and the Yellow Springs disintegrated. Within a few breaths of time, an earsplitting crash rattled out as the planet exploded. Meng Hao appeared, face pale, expression extremely cold, like a sword. He coughed up a mouthful of blood as he staggered backward across the land, as if he were being shoved by some mighty force. And yet, he did not lose a bit of that sharp and blade-like quality.

“The pinnacle of the Immortal Realm. 33 Heavens. Hm....” He wiped the blood from his mouth, and the coldness in his eyes ignited into a massive desire to fight.

Up ahead, the Yellow Springs shattered, and the 33 Yama Kings collapsed. Fang Wei also coughed up blood. Furthermore, although his right eye seemed filled with madness, signs of struggle could be seen in his left eye. That was... Fang Wei’s soul, fighting back!

Suddenly, Fang Wei’s true voice rang out, filled with the truth of his own desires: “I am a member of the Fang Clan, and my dream is to lead the Fang Clan to glory. Father! Grandfather! Patriarch! If your desire is to overthrow the clan, then... I disagree!”

However, almost as soon as Fang Wei’s true voice could be heard, the Sixth Patriarch cried, “Get back down!” and rapidly suppressed him. The left eye returned to its normal state, and Fang Wei coughed up another mouthful of blood, then looked at Meng Hao.

“Fang Hao!” Fang Wei wiped the blood from his mouth and took a step forward. 33 Heavens appeared once again, and boundless Immortal power

exploded out.

“What I want... is this feeling! I’ve finally done it! Finally, I have this perfect body!! This is my doppelgänger! In the future, it will be my true self. Fang Wei, you are my descendant, which means that this is an honor for you!” Fang Wei’s right hand lifted up, and 33 Heavens shot murderously toward Meng Hao.

“I’m going to help you kill this person, to achieve your desire!”

Meng Hao’s eyes flickered with intense killing intent. He looked coldly at Fang Wei for a moment, then began to advance. He raised his right hand, and his own 33 Heavens appeared.

“Paragon Bridge!” he said softly.

As soon as the words left his mouth, rumbling sounds filled Heaven and Earth. Shockingly, Meng Hao’s 33 Heavens transformed into the image of the Paragon Bridge. 123 meridians manifested behind the bridge as it sped toward Fang Wei.

“Who gives a crap about that thing? Hell World!” Fang Wei waved his right hand, instantly causing the Yellow Springs to appear. In addition, an illusory slice of the underworld manifested, rapidly turning corporeal.

As the two attacked each other, Fang Xiushan ignored any potential injuries he might receive and broke away from his fight with Meng Hao’s 19th Uncle. He then performed a minor teleportation, heading directly toward Meng Hao, eyes filled with killing intent. He waved his hand, causing his Ancient Realm cultivation base to explode with the destructive power of two extinguished Soul Lamps. A gigantic hand appeared which slashed toward Meng Hao.

“DIE!”

Shockingly, he joined forces with Fang Wei to attempt to kill Meng Hao, to slaughter him in spirit and body!

At this critical moment, Meng Hao waved his right hand, and the Paragon Bridge descended to block both Fang Wei and Fang Xiushan. Booms could be heard as the Paragon Bridge began to collapse. Meng Hao

shot backward, and his expression lacked any sort of alarm. Instead, it was filled with seething killing intent!

He extended his right hand, and there in his palm was a small fruit that was currently not visible to anyone but him.

It was... the first generation Patriarch's Nirvana Fruit!

With the Nirvana Fruit in hand, his towering killing intent influenced the entire area, making everything grow cold. Fang Wei and Fang Xiushan looked at Meng Hao's eyes, and for some unknown reason, they began to tremble.

# Chapter 997: Fang Xiushan... DIE!

Meng Hao's 123 Immortal meridians exploded with power, condensing the power of 33 Heavens into the majestic Paragon Bridge to block Fang Wei and Fang Xiushan.

Even as he retreated at full speed, his eyes flickered with a freezing light. He was looking at Fang Wei and Fang Xiushan almost as if they were dead.

Rumbling sounds could be heard, and Heaven and Earth shook violently. The Nirvana Fruit in Meng Hao's hand radiated scintillating light.

This was the first generation Patriarch's Nirvana Fruit!

It emanated an ancient aura that seemed to indicate that it had existed for countless years, and as soon as it appeared, the sensation of time inside the fruit seemed to influence everything in the area, making the region around Meng Hao look as if it were in a different era.

Fang Xiushan's gaze met Meng Hao's, and his heart trembled. He looked at the Nirvana Fruit for a moment, whereupon a sinister look appeared in his eyes, and his lips twisted into a cruel smile. "That's....

"Absorb that, and I won't even need to attack. You'll be dead without a doubt!"

Fang Wei's energy soared, but when he looked at Meng Hao, his heart began to pound. His gaze shifted to the Nirvana Fruit, and all of a sudden, an intense feeling of crisis exploded up in his heart.

He wasn't actually Fang Wei; he was the doppelgänger of the Sixth Patriarch. Due to this, he recognized that fruit, and as soon as he saw it, he realized that it... was completely different from the Nirvana Fruit that he remembered!

As soon as Meng Hao pulled it out, the Grand Elder, who was battling with Fang Heshan, looked over. When he saw what was happening, his face fell.

"Hao'er, you can't absorb that thing!!" he cried out urgently. Even as his

voice echoed out, he felt deep regret in his heart for the decisions he had made.

In the same moment that the Grand Elder called out, Fang Wei's eyes widened, and the sense of crisis within him exploded to a peak. His heart was pounding in a way that suggested that if Meng Hao absorbed that Nirvana Fruit, a momentous and shocking event would occur. He suddenly roared, "STOP HIM!"

Fang Wei took a step forward and waved his hand. 33 Heavens and 330 Immortal meridians transformed into the power of the Yellow Springs, exploding out to shake the Paragon Bridge.

At the same time, Fang Xiushan, despite his sudden, momentary hesitation, still went on the attack, exploding out with the power of an Ancient Realm cultivation base with two extinguished Soul Lamps. A shocking attack materialized, which consisted of an enormous illusory hand that slashed toward the Paragon Bridge.

The Paragon Bridge shook, and then and then began to collapse layer by layer. It was a Daoist magic that was as powerful as a Paragon, but... with Meng Hao's cultivation base, he could only force it to materialize. Considering the fact that Fang Wei and Fang Xiushan had combined forces, it only took a moment before the bridge couldn't hold out any longer, and began to collapse completely.

Once it was gone, there would be nothing to stand in the way of Fang Wei and Fang Xiushan, who would then instantly level deadly attacks against Meng Hao.

Meng Hao sped backward at top speed, his eyes cold. Even as Fang Wei and Fang Xiushan bashed against the Paragon Bridge, Meng Hao lifted the Nirvana Fruit and pushed it up against his forehead.

The fruit melted and sank down into his forehead, causing warmth to flow through him. His body shook and his mind trembled. He felt like he was about to be torn into pieces, and blue veins popped out on his face. Blood oozed out of his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth.

As Fang Wei and Fang Xiushan blasted the Paragon Bridge, Fang Wei's

heart was pounding violently. He went all out with his most powerful divine abilities, roaring as he... finally destroyed the bridge completely, the fragments of which scattered out in all directions.

Instantly, Fang Wei shot toward Meng Hao like a shooting star.

"DIE!" Fang Wei was getting a very bad feeling about what was happening with Meng Hao, so he pushed faster, his killing intent raging.

Fang Xiushan's killing intent also surged, and his desire to kill Meng Hao was stronger than ever. His cultivation base exploded with power, causing the enormous hand to smash toward Meng Hao, to crush him and obliterate him to wipe away the hatred in his heart.

As Fang Wei and Fang Xiushan closed in, Meng Hao was trembling, and his eyes were bright red. A wild and domineering aura suddenly erupted out from within him.

The aura caused Fang Wei to stare in shock, and Fang Xiushan's face to fall.

Next, Meng Hao let out a shocking roar. His body suddenly began to grow larger, and at the same time, his Immortal meridians... suddenly... increased rapidly!!!

He no longer had 123 meridians. The number of meridians increased with rapid speed, as did the Immortal dragons around him. They roared as 139, 152, 171, 196 dragons appeared....

Wild colors flashed in the sky, the wind screamed, and the heavenly bodies trembled!

In the blink of an eye, he had 200 meridians!

Meng Hao's aura also climbed wildly, almost as if he... would exceed the Immortal Realm!

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLE!

200 meridians was not the limit. The growth continued! 213. 235... all the way to 246 meridians!

That was fully double his previous limit!!

If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal. However, in the moment that his Immortal meridians doubled, Meng Hao's 33 Heavens exceeded that which was Immortal. They surpassed the great circle, erupting in such a way that all onlookers were dumbfounded to look up what appeared to be... 66 Heavens!

If you looked closely, though, you would see that they weren't in fact 66 Heavens. There were two extremes; one was the 33 Heavens up above, the other was the 33 Earths down below. In the middle of the two was Meng Hao!

His energy soared, and a terrifying aura exploded out. Fang Wei and Fang Xiushan's faces fell completely. Even Fang Xiushan suddenly felt a sensation of deadly crisis.

It was a type of crisis... that would lead to his complete and utter death!

Fang Xiushan's mind spun as he hoarsely said, "Impossible! Even if his power increases, he's still just an Immortal. I'm in the Ancient Realm! How could I possibly be experiencing such fear?!?!"

Fang Wei's face was ashen, and his eyes widened as he gasped.

"There's a kind of Immortal that can kill someone in the Ancient Realm.... In fact, according to legend, true Immortality is not the limit of the Immortal Realm. In ancient times, before the other Heavens and Earths in the starry sky collapsed, it was an age unlike the current age of Nine Mountains....

"Above true Immortality was another level. That was the level of... the Immortal Emperor!!

"If they look up, and wave a hand, 33 Heavens are destroyed! If they look down, and point, 33 Earths are crushed... an Immortal Emperor!" Fang Wei's scalp went numb and his mind filled with roaring. If he were here as his true self, then even if Meng Hao became an Emperor among Immortals, the Ancient Realm was still superior to 33 Heavens and 33 Earths. It would be as easy to slay Meng Hao as lifting his hand. But now... this was just a doppelgänger, and was merely a fleshly body that was limited by the constraints of Immortal power. He... was simply no match

for Meng Hao.

His mind spun, and without any hesitation, Fang Wei turned to flee.

Fang Xiushan didn't understand things as well as the possessed Fang Wei, who was actually the Sixth Patriarch. He hesitated, and thus, took a bit longer to begin to fall back. It was exactly within those few breaths of time that Meng Hao... made a move!

He looked up, and rumbling sounds filled the air. The sensation of being ripped apart caused his eyes to be completely red, filled with veins of blood. His body grew larger and, at the moment, he seemed to be in possession of a vast, intense power. He wasn't sure whether it was just a hallucination, but that power all of a sudden caused him to be filled with... a certain sensation.

It was as if he had reached a state in which he was the ultimate representation of every possible meaning of the word Immortal.

In that moment, the Nine Mountains and Seas trembled slightly, and ripples appeared that no cultivator could sense. These ripples massed outside of the Nine Mountains and Seas, encircling them, causing the sun and moon to pause in their eternal orbit.

If the Nine Mountains and Seas had a will, then as of this moment, it was as if that will was looking at Meng Hao and causing these ripples to emanate out, and the sun and moon to stop moving for a breath of time, as if to welcome.... something that was appearing for the first time since the formation of the Nine Mountains and Seas... the Immortal Emperor!

In the Immortal's cave in the Ruins of Immortality in Ninth Mountain and Sea, the white-robed woman rose to her feet. She looked toward Planet East Victory, and her perpetually unchanging expression suddenly flickered.

"With destiny like this, with good fortune like this... he is worthy of being in the League of Demon Sealers of the Nine Mountains and Seas...." she murmured. When she spoke the words Demon Sealers, her eyes flickered with pain and reminiscence.

"Immortal Ancient. Nine Seals. Are you two still around? I'm... the only one left. The only one...." She sounded pained, and in fact, a tear rolled down her cheek. Finally, she waved her hand; the sun and moon once again began to rotate, and the Nine Mountains and Seas went back to normal.

At the same time, the teardrop flew off into the distance, to some unknown land. Perhaps it became part of a violet sea, or perhaps, a tear among a rainstorm.

If it had a spirit, perhaps the teardrop would awaken, and would possess a yearning and a determination to transform into a sea.

Meanwhile, on Planet East Victory, on the back of Patriarch Reliance, was a young woman. She suddenly looked up, and a blank look could be seen in her eyes, as if she had just thought of something.

Meng Hao was unaware of the things happening in the Nine Mountains and Seas. At the moment, he was just barely able to endure the tearing pain caused by the terrifying power that filled him. He knew that he could only remain in this state for a short period of time, so he quickly raised his hand and pointed toward Fang Xiushan.

In that instant, his Divine Flame Immortal meridian erupted, causing a sea of flames to appear. It covered everything, wreathing the 33 Heavens and 33 Earths with endless flames of extermination.

A massive world of flames instantly shot toward Fang Xiushan.

Fang Xiushan's face fell, and the sense of crisis within him reached a pinnacle, causing his mind to thrum. He fell back at top speed, performing a double-handed incantation gesture. Innumerable divine abilities appeared, and blood sprayed out of his mouth. His Soul Lamps appeared, spinning around him, as did countless magical items, all of which fought back against Meng Hao.

In the instant that his divine abilities and magical items shot out, the sea of flames transformed into a huge hand which, in the blink of an eye, had completely inundated Fang Xiushan.

All of his divine abilities collapsed, and all of his magical items melted. Even his Soul Lamps burst into flames!

When the extinguished Soul Lamps were suddenly ignited, Fang Xiushan let out a miserable shriek, and his eyes filled with disbelief and astonishment. His Soul Lamps melted, and Fang Xiushan let out a howl as... he was completely covered in fire.

Moments later, the only thing that remained of him was drifting ash.

He was killed in body and soul!

# Chapter 998: The Fall of Fang Wei!

A brutal attack!

“Xiushan!!” When Fang Heshan saw what happened, his face filled with grief. He threw his head back and howled. Were it not for the Grand Elder going all out to block his way, he would have instantly charged towards Meng Hao.

As of this moment, all of the cultivators of the various sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea were staring in complete shock at what was happening. They already knew that Meng Hao was incredibly powerful, but when they saw him kill Fang Xiushan, they were completely shaken on a deep and profound level.

They looked at Meng Hao, eyes wide with jealousy.

“He’s a powerful expert who has surpassed everyone in his generation, and can even fight with people in the Ancient Realm!”

“It’s too bad that he’s going to perish because of the upheaval in the Fang Clan....”

“If he doesn’t die in this battle, then his future... will be unimaginable!” Gasps could be heard throughout the Ninth Mountain and Sea as Fang Xiushan died.

The disbelief on his face in the moments before death was clear. He was in the Ancient Realm, with two extinguished Soul Lamps. And yet, he died at the hands of an Immortal Realm cultivator. He had come to exact vengeance for his Wei’er, and in the end... had himself been annihilated.

From the moment he had learned that Meng Hao was returning to the clan, he had wanted to kill him. From the ambush out in the starry sky, to the way he had targeted Meng Hao in the clan, to the attempt on his life in the Ancestral Land, all of that proved that he and Meng Hao were as incompatible as fire and water.

Even more lamentable was that it wasn’t until the moment he died that he realized who his true enemy was. It wasn’t Meng Hao. It was the Sixth

Patriarch.

Perhaps Fang Xiushan did know. Perhaps he had known all along what would happen. And yet, in his mind, perhaps... he truly felt that allowing the Sixth Patriarch to possess his son would be an honor for Fang Wei.

Perhaps his way of thinking was madness, or perhaps not. In any case, it was no longer important.

Everything was settled by Meng Hao in his current state. The wave of a hand, the unleashing of a divine ability!

Meng Hao suddenly reached a certain enlightenment.

"Perhaps... all machinations and plots can be foiled with the wave of a hand by a powerful expert? Perhaps everything can even be reversed? If so, then will all of the upheaval in the Fang Clan... be changed by the wave of some powerful expert's hand?" Meng Hao looked around at the Fang Clan and the unceasing slaughter that was being carried out. None of the recent turns of events did anything to stop the carnage. Blood flowed everywhere, and screams of terror and rage floated about constantly. It was impossible to tell who was winning or losing, but it was clear... what would happen in the end.

The Fang Clan would be thoroughly destroyed.

Meng Hao couldn't shake the feeling that the upheavals in the Fang Clan were simply too strange. In fact, he still wasn't ready to completely accept everything that was happening.

The Fang Clan was one of the Four Great Clans, and at one time had in fact been the leader among those four clans. Therefore... it was hard to believe that, just like that, the clan would play out its final act.

Meng Hao looked over at the fleeing Fang Wei, and his eyes gleamed with killing intent.

"I can only stay in this state for seven more breaths of time...." he murmured. This was his most powerful state, and he could remain in it for a total of ten breaths. He took a deep breath, lifted his foot, and stepped forward.

That one step caused everything to seem to shrink. Instantly, he was directly behind Fang Wei. That was a speed that exceeded minor teleportation. That was greater teleportation!

Fang Wei was astonished to find Meng Hao suddenly right there. Meng Hao lifted his hand with indescribable speed and tapped Fang Wei.

“Detonate!” he said softly, his eyes glowing with coldness.

It was one word, but it echoed out in all directions, causing everything to shake. Divine Flame erupted around Fang Wei, prompting a wild howl. At the same time, Fang Wei performed a double-handed incantation gesture and spit out a mouthful of blood. Instantly, a blood-colored shield sprang up around him.

Shockingly, as Fang Wei stood inside the shield, the image of an old man appeared in his right eye. As he sat there cross-legged, he opened his eyes, and terrifying ripples of the Ancient Realm spread out.

Fang Wei had been completely pushed into a corner, so the Sixth Patriarch was forced to use his doppelgänger’s Essence power to fight back!

Rumbling filled the air, and Fang Wei coughed up another huge mouthful of blood. His chest sank inward, and the blood-colored shield expanded. Because of the resistance, the Essence of Divine Flame paused for a moment.

In that brief moment, Fang Wei transformed into a flickering shadow, and fell back instantly, blood spraying from his mouth, seriously injured. His scalp was numb, and the figure in his right eye was dim. This was only a doppelgänger of the Sixth Patriarch, so he had very little Essence, which he had just used to escape the deadly crisis he had been in. However, in that moment, the power he was using to suppress Fang Wei’s soul also weakened.

Suddenly, Fang Wei’s soul appeared in his left eye, struggling. According to the plan, Fang Wei would never have fought back. However, the dramatic upheavals in the Fang Clan led to an unexpected turn of events.

Fang Wei's soul struggled awake and began to fight against the Sixth Patriarch's possession, and over control of his own body.

"Fang Hao, kill me!!" he cried, trembling. "I told you that if I lost, you could take back what belongs to you!"

Meng Hao looked on, taciturn, expression complex. He looked at Fang Wei's eyes, then raised his right hand and waved it forward. 33 Heavens rumbled into being above Fang Wei's head.

Beneath his feet, 33 Earths appeared, transforming into a deadly snare!

Rumbling echoed out as the 33 Heavens crushed down, and the 33 Earths exploded with power. A powerful aura rose up in Fang Wei, and he coughed up blood. The old man in his right eye seemed filled with madness and terror; he was about to fight back, when suddenly a brilliant light shone out from Fang Wei's left eye.

"I am Fang Wei, Chosen of the Fang Clan. If your purpose in possessing me is to sow chaos in the Fang Clan, then I would rather... allow the bad to be destroyed with the good, and die together with you!" His true soul, which resided in his left eye, suddenly rose up and began fight directly with the Sixth Patriarch for control of his body.

He had always been matchlessly proud, had always considered himself to be the only true Chosen of the Fang Clan!

"Dammit!" raged the Sixth Patriarch. Originally, it wasn't that he didn't want to destroy Fang Wei's soul; rather, to perform a perfect possession, he couldn't do so, as he needed to slowly absorb the soul. He had never been worried about doing that, and yet, he had never imagined that Fang Wei's devotion to the clan would suddenly supercede everything. In truth, he had forgotten about Fang Wei's incredible pride.

Fang Wei was a Chosen of the clan. He was willing to die in battle, to be possessed, or to slaughter others. He was willing to advance by hook or by crook. However, he was not willing... to betray the clan. His most important purpose was to protect the clan, and to ensure that the other clan members viewed him as a hero!

He wanted to be the center of attention, the focus of the whole clan. He wanted prestige, and he wanted to become a powerful expert. He wanted to lead the clan into glory!

In reality, he had been unaware of the true plans being laid by his grandfather.

Meng Hao's expression was a complicated one as he held his right hand up in the air.

"Fang Hao, kill me! If I die, the Sixth Patriarch will be severely wounded. Perhaps the clan will have some hope then!! KILL ME!!"

The Sixth Patriarch was going crazy. Fang Wei's left eye was growing dim, as his soul fought desperately with the Sixth Patriarch for control of his body.

Fang Heshan was still fighting with the Grand Elder, and when he saw the crisis Fang Wei was in, he let out a bellow of rage. Booms rang out from his body, and suddenly, a fragment of jade appeared in his hand. He crushed it violently, causing intense ripples to spread out. The Grand Elder's face fell as he sensed the terrifying power in those ripples, and was forced to retreat.

As he fell back, Fang Heshan shot toward Fang Wei.

"Wei'er!!" Fang Heshan cried urgently.

Even as he closed in, Fang Wei's left eye began to shine brightly again. His left hand rose, trembling, and he pointed toward Fang Heshan. In that instant, the Yellow Springs appeared, along with his Immortal souls, all of which blocked Fang Heshan's path.

"Grandpa," he said, his voice quavering, "sir, when I was born, do you remember why you gave me the character Wei 卫 as a name? Sir... you told me that it was because I needed to defend the Fang Clan.... Grandpa... stay your hand...." When Fang Heshan heard his words, he trembled, and grief appeared in his eyes.

"Fang Hao, you have to take my place... to protect the Fang Clan! Come on! Take back your Nirvana Fruits!" Fang Wei closed his left eye, and

rumbling could be heard inside his body. A popping sound could suddenly be heard from his forehead. A split appeared, from within which two fruits emerged.

Meng Hao instantly felt a sense of intense familiarity. He lifted his right hand up toward the two Nirvana Fruits, which flew directly toward him and landed in his palm.

At the same time, Fang Wei coughed up a mouthful of blood, and his energy instantly weakened. The Sixth Patriarch let out a roar of defiance. Of his own initiative, Fang Wei shot toward Meng Hao's divine ability. No one could prevent him from doing so, and not even Meng Hao could stop the 33 Heavens and 33 Earths from exploding violently.

In that instant, the Sixth Patriarch in Fang Wei's right eye transformed into a wisp of smoke that shot out. However, before it could escape, Fang Wei's soul latched onto it and dragged it back.

"NO!!" The Sixth Patriarch's doppelgänger soul let out a howl of rage just as it was inundated by the rumbling 33 Heavens and 33 Earths.

Massive booms filled the air, and then the 33 Heavens and 33 Earths faded away. Fang Wei's body fell down toward the ground. His right eye was completely dark; the Sixth Patriarch had been exterminated in body and spirit.

Fang Wei's left eye was fading. The flame of his life force was snuffed out. Right before he died, he looked at Meng Hao, and his lips moved. He wasn't able to speak the words out loud, but Meng Hao understood exactly what he was saying.

He said... "Defend the Fang Clan."

All of a sudden, Meng Hao thought back to what it was like on Planet East Victory hundreds of years ago. He and Fang Wei were children. Fang Wei had always been stubborn, different from the other kids. He wouldn't follow Meng Hao around, but rather, spent time alone, in the shadows, working hard, trying to win the approval of others.

He seemed gloomy, but in truth, he had worked extremely hard over the

years. All of that led to the Fang Wei of today.

Meng Hao remembered when they were both six years old, and it was time for them to begin practicing cultivation. They had stood in front of all the clan Elders, and been questioned about why they wanted to be cultivators. Meng Hao's answer had been that after he grew up, he wanted to protect his dad and mom.

As for Fang Wei, the words he had spoken with his tender, young voice seemed to echo now in Meng Hao's ears.

"My grandpa picked the name Wei for me! I'm Fang Wei, and when I grow up, I'm going to defend the clan!"

The words Fang Wei had spoken as a child... were words that he had always remembered, even in the moment of his death!

BOOM!

Fang Wei slammed into the ground, and his aura was gone. He was dead!

# Chapter 999: The Terracotta Soldier Arrives!

As of this moment, the Chosen outside in the starry sky stared in shock. The cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea were also dumbstruck by the scene of Fang Wei's death.

For a Chosen to perish....

Furthermore, his actions before he had died left everyone moved. Everyone suddenly felt... unwilling to part ways with Fang Wei.

Fang Wei, Chosen of the Fang Clan!

The Fang in his name came from the Fang Clan. The Wei came from the word 'defend.'

Misery and bleakness covered the Fang Clan in their moment of upheaval. The death of a Chosen caused everyone's hearts to tremble. Many people couldn't help but wonder, if they were in Fang Wei's position, what would they do?

"Fang Wei... I will remember this name!"

"Wei... actually has THAT meaning...."

The chaotic rebellion continued to proceed in the Fang Clan. Clan members died at every moment, and the ancestral mansion was soaked with blood. The stench of gore spread out in all directions.

Fang Wei's death caused many clan members to suddenly grow very silent and bitter. However, this was not the time to be overwhelmed with grief, so they continued fighting.

Up in the starry sky, Fan Dong'er and the other Chosen looked on silently. None of them would do anything impulsive, so they stood by while the fighting went on.

The Fang Clan's Earth Patriarch fought with one of the Ji Clan's five Dao Realm experts, Ji Xiufang. Their battle was shocking to the extreme. Booms rang out as Essence power was unleashed. Both of these two were 1

Essence Dao Lords, and their attacks caused the starry sky to tremble, and wild colors to flash.

"The Fang Clan is doomed to destruction," Ji Xiufang said softly. "Fang Shoudao, you must know this in your heart of hearts. There's no reason to keep fighting back. That kid Fang Wei had backbone, which is laudable. Unfortunately... he was simply born in the wrong clan."

"Oh really?" replied Fang Shoudao, his voice light. He waved his hand, causing a river of stars to appear. In the blink of an eye, thousands of exchanges occurred between the two of them. The stars vibrated, and even the sealing shield around them trembled.

"The Three Great Daoist Societies won't be coming," said Ji Xiufang, laughing. "The Fang Clan... might have put on a good show of being powerful, but the Ji Clan has long since come to the realization that your clan's pretense of having secret Dao Realm experts is not true. You... really are the only Dao Realm cultivator!"

"What do you have, then, that will allow you to reverse fate?" Ji Xiufang's killing intent swirled. Booms echoed out between them.

"If you're so certain of that, then why are you trying to probe me with words?" Fang Shoudao replied indifferently. Ji Xiufang frowned in response. Actually... she wasn't certain. After all, this was... the Fang Clan!!

In years past, they were just as glorious as the Ji Clan, and were one of the two great battle clans that had existed under Lord Li.

The Ji Clan was certain that the Fang Clan was on the decline, that they could only put on a show of glory, and were in fact weak. However, the Ji Clan could not underestimate the resources at their disposal.

That was especially true when it came to Fang Shoudao, who seemed to be completely unruffled by the rivers of blood flowing in the Fang Clan on Planet East Victory. The fact that he was remaining calm caused Ji Xiufang to feel a bit uneasy.

"He definitely has some trump cards to play. But what are they...?"

Meanwhile, Fang Heshan hovered in midair above Planet East Victory,

trembling as he stared at the dead Fang Wei. Beneath the ancestral mansion, the Sixth Patriarch, who was fighting desperately with the Seventh Patriarch, coughed up a mouthful of blood.

Meng Hao maintained his silence as he looked down at Fang Wei's corpse. He felt no excitement at having retrieved his Nirvana Fruits. Deep in his heart, he sighed. He walked up to Fang Wei's corpse, and knelt down next to it. He put his hand on Fang Wei's chest and pushed lightly. Fang Wei's body vanished into Meng Hao's bag of holding. He did not want the body to be desecrated due to the chaos in the clan. Later, he would be buried, and it would be a grand funeral!

Meng Hao stood there thinking.

"At first, I didn't want to come here to Planet East Victory.... I wanted to go directly to the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite instead. However, father sent me here because he wanted me to retrieve my Nirvana Fruits."

He thought back to everything that had happened since he returned, and an idea suddenly sprang up in his mind.

"In that case, these upheavals in the clan, all of this... could it be that father actually knew it all was going to happen?"

Even as Meng Hao stood there thinking, shrill laughter could be heard coming from Fang Heshan.

"Fang Hao, what are you doing!? Give Wei'er back to me immediately!"

Meng Hao turned to look at Fang Heshan, then quietly said,

"He's my Clan Brother. My little bro didn't betray the clan, and therefore, his corpse is not to be defiled after his death. Fang Heshan, turn back from this path."

"There's no turning back. Xiushan! Wei'er! I... I can't turn back!" Fang Heshan's hair was in disarray, his eyes bloodshot. He seemed to have gone crazy, and as he glared at Meng Hao, his killing intent boiled.

"You son-of-a-bitch! You killed Xiushan and you killed Wei'er! Why are you still alive?! Why the hell are YOU still alive!?" Fang Heshan threw his

head back and laughed bitterly. His cultivation base erupted; originally, he had the power of three extinguished Soul Lamps, but as of now, he was under extreme provocation, and all of a sudden, the ripples of death spread out from him.

He was going all out, burning his own life force to suddenly extinguish three more of his Soul Lamps!!

As of this moment, he now raged with the destructive power of six extinguished Soul Lamps, causing Heaven and Earth to shake. The Grand Elder was just about to interfere, but Fang Heshan flicked his sleeve, shoving him away.

“Fang Hao, it’s time to die!!” Fang Heshan roared, transforming into a beam of light that shot toward Meng Hao with raging killing intent.

Behind him suddenly appeared three Elders from Fang Wei’s bloodline, who joined Fang Heshan in a deadly attack on Meng Hao.

19th Uncle wanted to intercept them, as did other members of the direct bloodline, but none of them were able to.

“Hao’er!!” 19th Uncle cried urgently.

It was at this point that the first generation Patriarch’s Nirvana Fruit emerged from Meng Hao’s forehead. His aura and his cultivation base slipped down from his previous level of Immortal Emperor, down to its original Realm.

His expression was calm, though, because... he could sense something that he had been constantly calling out to. The aura of the terracotta soldier!

It was coming!

After much calling, the ancestral land began to emanate ripples that appeared in Meng Hao’s heart. He calmly looked at Fang Heshan, and his eyes suddenly shone with a cold flicker.

He didn’t move a muscle. He just looked over.

Fang Heshan got closer and closer, until he was less than 300 meters

away. The power of six extinguished Soul Lamps burst out explosively. It transformed into a gigantic golden lotus that emanated a shocking murderous aura. This was a golden lotus that seemed capable of exterminating any and all Immortals!

Even Ancient Realm cultivators with four extinguished Soul Lamps or fewer would be killed by it!

Rumbling could be heard as the enormous golden lotus smashed murderously toward Meng Hao....

Meng Hao didn't move. He looked forward as coldly as ever. It was at this point that, all of a sudden, cracking sounds could be heard directly in front of him, and everything started to shake. A massive rift opened up in the air right in front of Meng Hao!

It was as if someone was slashing an enormous, invisible blade through the air, splitting it apart and creating a gigantic fissure. In the same moment that the rift appeared, it was possible to glimpse... the Fang Clan Ancestral Land!

Next, an archaic and ancient greatsword noiselessly emerged from within the rift. It slashed down, seemingly capable of rending Heaven and Earth. Boundless light shone out from the blade.

The light flashed past the incoming golden lotus, which was immediately slashed in two. It fell apart instantly, and then the light moved on toward Fang Heshan.

Fang Heshan's six extinguished Soul Lamps trembled violently and began to crack and collapse, as did all of his divine abilities and Daoist magics. The light passed Fang Heshan and then bore down on the three Ancient Realm Elders, who began to tremble violently.

Their Soul Lamps shattered, and they seemed to be physically locked in place in midair. Their eyes shone with disbelief and astonishment. Even as they forced themselves to look down....

Everything was over!

The light shot up into the sky, and when it vanished, three heads flew

high into the air, and three headless bodies plummeted down to the ground.

The entire battlefield went completely silent.

The three Elders behind Fang Heshan were dead!

Souls extinguished! Slaughtered!

One sword attack ... killed three Ancient Realm experts!!

As for Fang Heshan, there was a long line of blood on his neck. As it turned out, it wasn't three Ancient Realm experts killed, it was four!

Fang Heshan had managed to hold onto his life for a bit longer, and prevent his head from falling off. He looked into the rift with despair and disbelief....

What had just happened rocked the Heavens, shook the earth, and completely shocked all of the cultivators of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

The members of the Fang Clan, both the traitors and the loyalists, all felt an unprecedentedly cold aura that caused them to shiver. They looked over at Meng Hao, and the rift which had just appeared, as well as the archaic sword.

Slowly, a 3,000-meter figure stepped out from within the rift.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

As it stepped out, everyone's hearts started to pound. When the figure became visible, everyone in the entire Fang Clan couldn't help but cry out in alarm and disbelief.

"That's... that's...."

"The Dao Guardsman of the Ancestral Land! It's... it's not just a statue? How come it's moving?!?!"

"The Dao Guardsman! For years and years it's stood there unmoving! According to the legends, it flew here from out in the Heavens! It's supposedly waiting for someone! Now it's actually moving!!"

"Could it be because of the rebellion in the clan?!?!" All of the clan

members were shocked. All cultivators' minds spun. They just couldn't believe everything that was happening.

Simultaneously, the aura of a Quasi-Dao Paragon suddenly exploded off of the terracotta soldier.

The aura spread out, causing everything to shake. Endless rumbling sounds could be heard, and all Fang Clan members felt their hearts trembling.

Ripples that seemed capable of sweeping across anyone in the Ancient Realm swept out. That was... the madness of a Quasi-Dao Paragon!

Up in the starry sky, Ji Xiufang, who was still fighting desperately with the Fang Clan Earth Patriarch, sensed what was happening, and her eyes widened.

"So, that's your trump card," she said. "Well, did you really think that a Quasi-Dao Realm Dao Guardsman would be capable of resolving the crisis in the Fang Clan?"

Even as Ji Xiufang spoke, Fang Clan Earth Patriarch Fang Shoudao felt shock rising up in his heart. This development was something he hadn't anticipated at all.

"The resources of the Fang Clan are far too deep for someone like you to speculate about," he said. "The Dao Guardsman is naturally something that I–"

Before he could even get halfway through what he wanted to say, he suddenly stopped speaking. His eyes went wide as he looked toward Planet East Victory. Ji Xiufang had the same reaction, and stared in shock.

What they saw... was the Dao Guardsman step all the way out into Planet East Victory. As the aura of a Quasi-Dao Paragon radiated out, the Dao Guardsman suddenly... bent down on one knee and lowered its head in greeting to Meng Hao!

Everyone was flabbergasted.

"This.... This...."

“The Dao Guardsman is kneeling to Meng Hao!?!?”

“How could Karma play out like this? Just what is going on!?!?”

“Even the Dao Guardsman is going to protect him...?” Blood oozed out of Fang Heshan’s mouth, and he began to laugh bitterly. Then, blood exploded out of his neck, and his head toppled off of his body, which then tumbled down toward the ground, dead.

# Chapter 1000: The Fang Clan's Second Dao Realm Expert!

In the same moment that everyone was flabbergasted by the appearance of the terracotta soldier, it lifted its head and looked at Meng Hao. Apparently sensing Meng Hao's divine will, it hefted its greatsword and began to slaughter its way into the Fang Clan ancestral mansion.

As of this moment, the traitorous clan members were completely shaken mentally, and could feel fear rising up within them. The terrifying aura of a Quasi-Dao Paragon could easily slaughter any and all Ancient Realm experts.

Without a way to fight back against the terracotta soldier, the rebellion would be almost instantly crushed.

A powerful expert could, based on strength alone, crush any and all plots and schemes!

Rumbling filled the air as the terracotta soldier went on the attack. The loyal members of the Fang Clan were extremely excited, and the traitors had no choice but to fall back against the onslaught, their scalps numb. As of this moment, the battle had reached a complete turning point.

The various sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea were also astonished, and many of them had already come to the conclusion that the terracotta soldier must the Fang Clan's trump card.

In the moment that the terracotta soldier began slaughtering its way through the ancestral mansion, suddenly, Ji Xiufang began to chuckle, and then sighed inwardly. Even though the Fang Clan was awash with torrents of blood, they still made her feel uneasy. She had not been able to tell what Fang Shoudao was thinking, and had been ever vigilant regarding their mysterious trump card.

However, now that the Fang Clan had played that trump card, Ji Xiufang became completely confident. Chuckling, she sent out a type of divine will that... instantly caused the faces of three of the Chosen outside in the

starry sky to flicker.

Almost in the same moment that their expressions changed, fissures appeared in their foreheads. In the blink of an eye, those fissures had cut down to their jaws, and then past their chests.

It was as if a sharp blade had sliced them in half! Blood sprayed out as... three unfamiliar cultivators suddenly stepped out from inside of their bodies!

When they emerged, they were no larger than infants, and yet they rapidly grew bigger. They quickly grew to ordinary size, and soon it was obvious that they were three old men!

As soon as they appeared, their energy surged, and a strong Death aura rose up from them, as if not much of their flame of life remained to burn inside of them. Apparently their longevity had left them poised on the brink of death for years.

However, the auras they emitted indicated that they were extremely powerful. The starry sky trembled, and everything went dim, because these men... emanated the aura of Quasi-Dao Paragons!

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLE!

As they stepped out, the other Chosen such as Fan Dong'er and the others stared in shock. Their hearts beat wildly as they witnessed everything that was happening.

The three old men smiled coldly, and it was obvious that their eyes were filled with madness. They looked like three Immortal Divinities, powerful enough to shake the Heavens. Endless ripples spread out into the stars, and everything trembled as they shot toward Planet East Victory.

Their speed was virtually indescribable, and they seemed deranged, bent on destroying everything, as if they wished to release all of the darkness that they had accumulated throughout their entire lives.

It didn't matter what the horrifying consequences of their deaths would be, they wanted to go out in a blaze of glory!

All of the sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea looked at the three men with utter shock, and felt incredible coldness rising up in their hearts.

“So this is how the Ji Clan does things, huh...?”

“Three Quasi-Dao Paragons. Their descendants... are all sects that long since became subservient to the Ji Clan!”

“Wow... just how many years in advance did the Ji Clan prepare to overthrow the Fang Clan?!”

Up in the starry sky, Fang Shoudao also saw what was happening, and a strange expression could be seen on his face that no one could possibly interpret. When Ji Xiufang saw the look, she could suddenly hear her own heart pounding in her chest.

“You’re not worried?” she asked.

“Why would I be worried?” he responded. Fang Shoudao smiled slightly, then waved his hand, unleashing a divine ability as he resumed battling with Ji Xiufang.

“Could it be that the statue isn’t his trump card?” she thought, feeling shocked. “Where is Fang Shoudao’s confidence coming from?! Why is he so unperturbed!?!?” Killing intent gleamed in Ji Xiufang’s phoenix-like eyes. “Well, It doesn’t matter, I’ll worry about it after the Fang Clan is destroyed!”

Booms filled the air as the three Quasi-Dao Paragons descended upon Planet East Victory, filled with the madness of extermination, and shocking auras. The sky went dim, the ground quaked, and rivers flowed in reverse.

From the ground, the three men looked like shooting stars exuding an air of madness. They shot toward the Fang Clan ancestral mansion, sending massive pressure out ahead of them. The ground shook, and numerous buildings collapsed. The resulting dust didn’t dare to rise up into the air, but was crushed back down onto the surface of the ground.

All of the members of the Fang Clan looked on with flickering faces.

Many couldn't take the pressure, and coughed up mouthfuls of blood.

The three old men shot like meteors toward the terracotta soldier and the loyal members of the Fang Clan. The traitors immediately went wild with joy, and booms echoed out as slaughter was once again unleashed in the ancestral mansion.

The terracotta soldier looked up, then, without the slightest hesitation, flew up and went all-out with every scrap of power it had to block the descending three old men!

Everything went dim, the heavenly bodies shook, and a fierce wind kicked up.

Meng Hao's mind trembled as he saw the terracotta soldier flying into battle. He saw the look of madness and violence in the three old men; they almost didn't look like cultivators, but rather, wild beasts that wanted to exterminate all living things.

It was as if they wanted to make an accounting with all of Heaven and Earth.

"Why do we have to die so soon when other people can continue to live!? Since we're going to die, the more people we can take with us to the grave, the more glorious it will be!"

"Quasi-Dao Paragon...." thought Meng Hao, instantly understanding the situation. The reason why Quasi-Dao experts were called Paragons was... because of fear. Because... people in that realm were absolutely insane.

Because they were on the verge of death, they had no fear. All of the darkness that had built up in their hearts could explode out at any time. Each and every one of them could make all living things weep.

The three old men laughed coldly, and when they spoke, their hoarse voices were filled with incredible savagery and insanity.

"Trifling statue! Screw off!"

"Today I will be baptized in blood! Not a single one of you vile Fang Clan cultivators will be left alive! You'll all die!"

"From today forth, there will no longer be a Fang Clan in the Ninth Mountain and Sea! There will be a new clan!"

Booms could be heard as the terracotta soldier slammed into the three old men, who joined forces in attack, unleashing powerful divine abilities. The sun, moon, and the skies above materialized, transforming into three beams of destructive light that smashed into the terracotta soldier.

Massive booms could be heard as the terracotta soldier swung its greatsword, using all of its power to fight back against the three men. The terracotta soldier was forced back over and over again. Cracking sounds emanated out from it, and its body was covered in fissures. However, it vastly diminished the speed with which the three old men were advancing.

"Terracotta soldier!!" cried Meng Hao, his eyes bloodshot. His heart hurt to see even one crack on the gift left behind by his foster father, so the fact that numerous cracks were now visible tore at his insides. Unfortunately, the terracotta soldier was not capable of simultaneously fighting back against three opponents relying only on its own power. Furthermore, Meng Hao's cultivation base was simply insufficient to make a difference in this genocidal battle.

The members of the Fang Clan were in a state of despair. Some let out miserable shrieks and resorted to self-detonation to protect the clan. Others stood there trembling, unsure of what to do.

All types of attitudes and characters appeared within the members of the Fang Clan at this point in time.

It was then that, all of a sudden, a cold harrumph could be heard echoing from outside of the ancestral mansion, from... the Dao of Alchemy Division. Next, an incredible aura exploded out from that same region, along with a dense cloud of insects.

They turned into a bright beam of light completely made up of... Unicorn Immortals!

In the middle of all the Unicorn Immortals was a person, who, when Meng Hao saw him, caused him to gape.

It was... Pill Elder Fang Danyun!

His cultivation base exploded with power similar to that of the six Patriarchs located underneath the Fang Clan. It was the rippling power of at least ten extinguished Soul Lamps. At first, it didn't seem powerful enough to even cause the Quasi-Dao Paragons to tremble. However, as they flew out, the Unicorn Immortals began to explode. They transformed into beams of light that bored madly into Fang Danyun, causing his cultivation base to rise up with shocking speed.

In the blink of an eye, Fang Danyun actually... began to emit the aura of a Quasi-Dao Paragon!!

This was not borrowed power used to increase his cultivation base. Instead... this was the loosening of a seal! The innumerable Unicorn Immortals were actually part of his cultivation base, and were now returning to him!

Fang Danyun had reached the peak of the Ancient Realm many years ago. Unfortunately, he had failed to enter the Dao Realm, and was actually a Quasi-Dao Paragon. However, he did not go mad, and was eventually able to disperse the power that had built up inside his body. He fused that power into the bodies of the Unicorn Immortals, causing his cultivation base to fall back down. Because of that, he was able to preserve his life force and prevent it from dispersing!

After that, he had devoted himself to the Dao of alchemy in the hopes of refining some sort of medicinal pill that would allow him to seek a new Dao despite being a Quasi-Dao Paragon!

Now that the three Quasi-Dao old men were on the attack, Fang Danyun chose to explode out with power to defend the clan. Even though this would accelerate his death, it was still his decision.

A bright beam of light shot through the air to join the terracotta soldier in fighting viciously against the three Quasi-Dao experts.

Fang Danyun's appearance on the scene caused the three old men to stare in shock. However, they weren't too surprised by this turn of events. They waved their hands, causing booms to fill the air as four people and

one statue fought a raging battle in the sky.

Meanwhile....

It was at this point that, all of a sudden, an incredibly shocking aura erupted from... the Medicine Immortal Sect!

On Planet East Victory, there was one other force that the Fang Clan had never once been adversarial to, and that was... the Medicine Immortal Sect!

According to the stories, the Patriarch of the Medicine Immortal Sect had forsaken the Fang Clan and established his own school of thought, which eventually became the Medicine Immortal Sect. In fact, they could concoct pills using Fang Clan pill formulas that even the Fang Clan couldn't produce.

There were actually many rumors floating around Planet East Victory regarding the past relationship between the Fang Clan and the Medicine Immortal Sect.

As soon as the aura exploded out, it filled Planet East Victory, suppressing all cultivators. This aura... was not that of the Ancient Realm, nor the Quasi-Dao Realm, but rather... the Dao Realm!!

In response to the eruption of the aura, the three Quasi-Dao experts' faces fell. In contrast, Fang Danyun didn't seem surprised at all, and continued fighting.

All of the loyal members of the Fang Clan suddenly felt their blood boiling in excitement.

Conversely, the traitorous clan members' hearts began to tremble. These shocking changes to the situation left them completely shaken.

Apparently, all the secret weapons had been deployed!!

"Ji Clan, this battle is over!" said an ancient voice. It echoed out from within the Medicine Immortal Sect, shaking everything like thunder. This was the Patriarch who had forsaken the clan years ago. Suddenly, he appeared, a middle-aged man with a calm expression. As he strode out, all

of the traitorous clan members coughed up blood and were sent flying backward.

# Chapter 1001: The Ji Clan's Last Secret Weapon!

The various sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea were in an uproar. The Dao Realm Patriarchs had bright gleams in their eyes, and their expressions were extremely serious as they looked over at Planet East Victory, and the middle-aged man emerging from the Medicine Immortal Sect.

“Fang Yanxu!”

“It’s Fang Yanxu! He forsook the Fang Clan and started his own school of thought! He established the Medicine Immortal Sect....” 1

“So, he’s actually reached the Dao Realm. I remember that back in the day he was an Ancient Realm cultivator....”

“So, this is the Fang Clan, huh? Their hidden resources are so profound! The Medicine Immortal Sect is something that everyone knew about, and yet their allegiance went as unnoticed as a shadow in the lamplight!!”

Up in the starry sky, a slight smile could be seen on Fang Shoudao’s face, and there was a profound gleam of meaning in his eyes. Ji Xiufang, who was still locked in combat with him, suddenly felt her eyes go wide.

“Fang Yanxu.... So HE’s your trump card! I can’t believe you were able to hold off on allowing a Dao Realm expert like that to make an appearance.... More than half of the members of your clan have died, and you even waited for us to unleash our secret weapon before making your move!” But then, Ji Xiufang looked at Fang Shoudao and smiled.

“Unfortunately for you,” she said, “when the Ji Clan makes a move, we don’t lose! This is your final trump card, right?” She smiled, a smile as cold as ice. Then, just as suddenly, she felt her heart sinking. That was because Fang Shoudao actually... was not just calm. No, he was looking into her eyes with a profound look.

The sight of it once again filled Ji Xiufang with alarm.

"You're bluffing!" she declared. A thousand thoughts ran through her head, but she couldn't think of any area where something had been overlooked in their plan. She was certain that the Fang Clan did not have any more trump cards, and therefore, she smiled coldly at Fang Shoudao, and began to fight once again.

Booms echoed out in the starry sky, and down on Planet East Victory, the members of the Fang Clan were extremely excited. Meng Hao looked over at the middle-aged man approaching from off in the distance, and could clearly sense the Dao Realm Essence fluctuations.

The faces of the three old men from the Ji Clan instantly fell. Although their longevity was rapidly withering away, they still had decades of life left to live. Now that they were up against a Dao Realm expert, someone who was qualified to kill them in an instant, roaring filled their minds, and they instantly fell into retreat.

In that moment, however, Fang Yanxu of the Medicine Immortal Sect laughed and closed in. He waved his right hand, and an enormous power surged toward the retreating men.

Booms shook everything as Essence power exploded out. The three men let out shrill cries, and blood sprayed from their mouths as they retreated at top speed. As for all of the other traitorous clan members in the ancestral mansion, they began trembling, and likewise fell into frenzied retreat.

All of this seemed to be a complete reversal of the previous events. From the look of things, the rebellion was about to conclude!

However, for some reason, Meng Hao felt his heartbeat increasing. It was as if... something was about to occur that would cause a monumental change in all of the upheaval in the clan .

This feeling came completely unexpectedly, and only continued to grow more intense.

Up in midair, the three Quasi-Dao experts bellowed in rage. Realizing that flight was not an option, their madness overwhelmed them and they turned and shot toward Fang Yanxu. Rumbling echoed out, and the air was

shattered. Wild winds screamed, and cracks appeared in the surface of the ground.

The attacks launched by the terracotta soldier and Pill Elder added hail to snow. Blood sprayed from the mouths of the three men, and they howled miserably. One of them lost his right arm, which exploded and vanished into a haze of blood.

They lashed out with extreme power, but it was all contained and blocked. Their faces filled with despair as the shadow of death spread out to cover their hearts.

Down on the ground, the traitorous clan members were being chased down and killed. More blood spread out, and countless people died. Even those who chose to flee ended up finding no place to flee to.

Elders fought viciously. Immortal Realm clan members battled. Spirit Realm clan members went equally wild.

Everything seemed to be turning around for the loyal clan members, and yet Meng Hao's nervous sensation continued to grow more intense. It was as if... some eruption was about to occur.

As the Patriarchs of the sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea watched the battle, their feelings, although not as intense as Meng Hao's, did cause them to hesitate.

"The resources of the Fang Clan are extremely profound.... They definitely deserve to be one of the Four Great Clans. However, when the Ji Clan attacks, could it really be resolved so simply?"

"The Fang Clan has unleashed all of their secret weapons. Does the Ji Clan... have anything left in reserve?"

"Could it be that the three Dao Realm experts outside the sealing shield will join in the battle?"

"Not likely. The Three Great Daoist Societies... have already quelled the uprisings in their respective organizations. If those three dared to enter the fight, the Three Great Daoist Societies would definitely seize the opportunity to make a move!"

“So... what trick does the Ji Clan have up its sleeve?” The Dao Realm Patriarchs all watched closely.

“Something’s off!” As Meng Hao looked around, he realized that apparently, nobody else had the same feeling as him. He seemed to be the only one in the entire clan who thought something fishy was going on.

Up in midair, booms rang out from the battles going on. Fang Yanxu was in a position of complete superiority, and when he attacked, massive explosions resulted. The three Quasi-Dao old men were already injured, and could just barely fight back. Blood spurted out from their wounds constantly, and they were clearly on the verge of being eradicated in spirit and body.

Down below, the traitorous clan members were suffering successive defeats. They were suffering gruesome and severe casualties, and it appeared to be impossible for them to ever again seize the upper hand.

Despite that, the sense of imminent disaster continued to grow stronger in Meng Hao.

He wasn’t sure why, but subconsciously, he found himself looking around at the members of the Fang Clan in the ancestral mansion. His gaze swept about, and just when he was about to give up, his eyes suddenly went wide, and fixed upon a single person.

That was... Fang Donghan!

Back on Planet South Heaven, he had helped Meng Hao escape from an ambush. After Meng Hao returned to the Fang Clan, he had not acted with any sort of hostility. Apparently, his main goal was to incite Meng Hao and Fang Wei into fighting each other. After they were both injured, then he would be able to rise to prominence.

That was what Meng Hao had always assumed. Now, as he looked over at Fang Donghan, his heart began to pound. That was because Fang Donghan’s lips were suddenly twisted into a smile of derision. Apparently, he was not among the traitors, yet no fighting had occurred in his vicinity. He stood there, apparently able to remain concealed from the views of all others, completely overlooked by everyone around him.

Perhaps you could even say that he had been forgotten!

It was impossible to say what method he had used to make all of the other clan members forget his existence....

He was visible, but anyone that looked at him couldn't remember who he was; it was a strange sensation indeed.

When Meng Hao looked at him, he could apparently sense it, and looked back. Their gazes locked on to each other, and Meng Hao's mind filled with roaring. His face flickered as an unprecedented sensation of crisis exploded out within him.

Even as that happened, Meng Hao's vision swam, and he suddenly felt as if he were entering another world. It was a world where everything was as crimson as blood. The ground was like a mass of gore, and roaring sounds filled the air. All of a sudden, countless iron chains snaked up from the ground. They were red, as if they had been stained by unimaginable amounts of blood, and they flew out in Meng Hao's direction, instantly wrapping around him to bind him up.

He was absolutely powerless to resist, almost as if he had turned into a mortal. Even more terrifying to Meng Hao was the fact that he was incredibly sleepy, as if he couldn't even keep his eyelids open.

No matter how alarmed he became, he was incapable of controlling his own body, and was clearly on the verge of falling fast asleep.

As the chains closed in on him, all of a sudden, the first generation Patriarch's Nirvana Fruit suddenly began to vibrate inside of his bag of holding.

A tremor ran through him, and then he began to quiver all over. He suddenly woke up, and his eyes widened. The vision he had been experiencing shattered into fragments, which then turned into a windstorm that swept about in all directions. It was as if some massive power had reached out, grabbed ahold of him, and wrenched him forcibly out of that world.

Blood sprayed from his mouth as his vision returned to normal. He was

still on Planet East Victory, in the Fang Clan. He could see Fang Donghan smiling at him, a cold, deviant smile. The sensation Meng Hao got was that of unspeakable fear and terror. It was as if there was something hiding inside of Fang Donghan... some sort of towering Immortal Divinity that could crush even the Dao Realm!

Fang Donghan looked deeply at Meng Hao, as if he were somewhat surprised that Meng Hao had been able to extricate himself from that strange world.

"He's not Fang Donghan!!" Rumbling filled Meng Hao's mind. A single glance had thrown him into a terrifying, blood-colored world, and Meng Hao got the feeling that if he didn't possess that Nirvana Fruit, then... he would certainly have perished!!

Even after having been pulled out, he still coughed up blood, and his chest ached, almost as if his heart had been tugged at by invisible hands. His face was ashen as he backed up, and without the slightest hesitation, he called out to the terracotta soldier with divine will.

Get back here!!

The terracotta soldier was currently fighting alongside Fang Yanxu against the three Quasi-Dao experts. However, it didn't hesitate for even a moment. As soon as it sensed the divine will, it stopped attacking and shot back toward Meng Hao.

Even as the terracotta soldier started moving, Fang Donghan tilted his head, an icy smile plastered on his face. Then, he extended his right hand and gently waved it through the air.

That movement caused Fang Danyun's expression to fall. Rumbling sounds filled him, and blood sprayed from his mouth. He tried to retreat, but before he could move very far, blood spurted out all over his body. Cracking sounds could be heard as numerous rips and tears opened up. It happened ten times in a row, and in the blink of an eye, he was drastically weakened, and even began to emanate a boundless Death aura.

From the look of it, even a Quasi-Dao Paragon... could be severely wounded by a single handwave of Fang Donghan!

At the same time, Fang Yanxu let out a powerful roar as he performed a double-handed incantation gesture. Essence power exploded out, the Essence of plants and vegetation. Countless plants appeared in his vicinity, but they immediately withered up. Fang Yanxu coughed up a mouthful of blood as he tumbled backward. Apparently, even his cultivation base... was forced back by the attack!

The wave of a hand seriously injured Pill Elder and forced Fang Yanxu back. This turn of events was too sudden, and if the terracotta soldier had not been moving toward Meng Hao, it would have fallen apart.

“You....” said Fang Yanxu, his eyes wide with disbelief and astonishment. He looked down into the crowd from up in midair, at the person who everyone had overlooked and forgotten... Fang Donghan!

“The Ji Clan is more useless than I thought....” Fang Donghan said softly. He stepped up into the air, rising up, his hair floating around him. His appearance gradually changed, and as everyone watched, he became someone else, not Fang Donghan, but rather, a middle-aged man.

“Were it not for me awakening just in the nick of time, I’m afraid all of the Ji Clan’s preparations would have been in vain.” Fang Donghan shook his head as he hovered there in midair, his body emanating boundless cultivation base ripples. He looked like... a Paragon of Heaven and Earth. The sensation of bloodline ripples emanated out from him, making it clear that he was a member of the Fang Clan, filling all hearts with rumbling.

“Is there anyone left in the Fang Clan who recognizes me?” Fang Donghan said, his voice soft but boundlessly ancient.

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1. Fang Yanxu’s name in Chinese is 方言墟 fāng yán xū. Yan means “speech” or “words.” Xu means “ruins”.

# Chapter 1002: Who Are You!?

Because of the bloodline aura that emanated off of him, everyone in the Fang Clan, including Meng Hao, could sense that... he was definitely not from the Ji Clan. He was definitely a member of the Fang Clan. Furthermore, the bloodline sense they felt indicated that he was older than almost all of the other clan members. He was incredibly ancient.

Meng Hao was shaken inwardly. This was the same type of feeling he had gotten from the corpse of the first generation Patriarch in the necropolis!

The entire ancestral mansion was completely quiet, and all clan members stared in shock.

Out in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, the Dao Realm Patriarchs of the various sects and clans were shaken. Their eyes opened wide, and expressions of shock could be seen on their faces. The feeling they got when looking at Fang Donghan was... one of complete terror and fright!

“Who...?” The Dao Realm Patriarchs all felt their faces flickering, and they began to pant. Actually, none of them had the slightest impression of Fang Donghan.

“Who are you?!” Fang Yanxu’s face was pale, and he coughed up another mouthful of blood. His body was almost entirely black, as if some sort of curse power was spreading inside of him.

“Who am I?” asked Fang Donghan. Somehow, his expression exuded incredible archaicness.

“I’m Fang Daozi. I am... the eldest son of the first generation Patriarch. Have all you younglings of the Fang Clan forgotten about me?” 1

The voice was like thunder striking against all of the Heavens.

His single statement shook all of the sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. All who heard him, all of the cultivators who were watching, felt their minds battered by waves of shock.

“He’s... he’s... the eldest son of the Fang Clan’s first generation

Patriarch?"

"That's not possible! The Fang Clan's first generation Patriarch was of the same era as Lord Ji. He died a long time ago, and his son couldn't possibly have lived for so long!"

"Fang Daozi.... Fang Daozi.... Now that I think about it, I'm pretty sure I've read about that name in the ancient records of the Ninth Mountain and Sea."

The cultivators were in an uproar. As for the Dao Realm Patriarchs, they looked on in wide-eyed shock. However, it didn't take long for them to place the name.

"Fang Daozi!! I remember that in the earliest generation, there was someone by that name... who was personally killed by the first generation Patriarch. The reason was never made clear!"

"That person existed in an age far, far removed from our own? Is he really still alive?"

"What level has his cultivation base reached?"

Everyone outside the clan was shocked. Strangely, however, the members of the Fang Clan stared blankly. None of them had ever even heard of this eldest son of the first generation Patriarch.

It was almost as if there were no record of him in any of the clan's histories at all. And yet, because of the bloodline sensation they got from him, they were certain about one thing. This Fang Daozi was absolutely, positively a member of the Fang Clan.

Furthermore, he had an ancient bloodline that was completely terrifying!

The Three Great Daoist Societies were shocked by this turn of events. They could never have imagined that a powerful expert like this would be hiding in the Fang Clan. Furthermore, his identity was shocking to the extreme. On top of all of that, he was colluding with the Ji Clan.

As Fang Daozi made his appearance on Planet East Victory, the Fang Clan's Dao bell began to materialize in midair over the ancestral mansion.

Then, it started to emit boundless light, and to toll.

That was... the tolling that could be heard when a clan member appeared with a very strong bloodline. After their identity was recorded in the bell, the resonance that formed caused the bell's tolling to ring out.

The sound shocked all of the members of the Fang Clan to the core, and confirmed that Fang Daozi... was definitely a member of the Fang Clan.

"What an annoying sound," said Fang Daozi, sighing. "It reminds me of that damned old man. Shut UP!" His eyes flickered with an intense light, and as he spoke, the Dao bell suddenly stopped tolling. It went completely silent.

Meng Hao stood there in the crowd, panting. He looked up at Fang Daozi up in midair, and his heart trembled. There was really no possible way he could ever have imagined that there would be such drastic upheavals and momentous events within the Fang Clan.

Obviously... these upheavals were closely connected to Fang Daozi.

The fighting between the clan members in the ancestral mansion had come to a halt. Everyone was completely shocked as they looked up into the air. Even the traitorous clan members weren't really sure what was happening.

Pill Elder's face was pale white, and he fell back. Fang Yanxu wiped the blood from his face and glared down at Fang Daozi.

The three Quasi-Dao experts sighed in relief. After glancing fearfully at Fang Daozi, their eyes once again filled with the mad desire for destruction, and they glanced coldly at the hosts of cultivators in the Fang Clan.

"There really isn't anyone who remembers me?" Fang Daozi said with a sigh, his voice incredibly ancient. He then waved his hand and pointed up into the air.

His finger caused the sky to shatter. A huge boom echoed out as a massive vortex appeared. It began to spin, causing rumbling sounds to echo out as something became visible in the vortex.

Shockingly, everyone could see Ji Xiufang and Fang Shoudao fighting each other.

Ji Xiufang then started to laugh. She quickly moved, stepping into the vortex and then appearing in midair above Planet East Victory.

"Xiufang offers greetings, Senior," she said with a sweet smile, bowing to Fang Daozi.

Fang Shoudao's face went very dark, and he pursued her into the vortex. After emerging from it, he turned to look at Fang Daozi, his eyes icy.

"Fang Shoudao," Ji Xiufang said, smiling, "instead of looking at this as the Ji Clan attacking the Fang Clan, it would be better to say... that the Ji Clan is just paying back a favor to a Senior member of the Fang Clan."

Fang Shoudao didn't respond. He clasped hands and bowed to Fang Daozi.

"Shoudao offers greetings, Patriarch Daozi."

Fang Daozi looked over at Fang Shoudao and smiled.

"You're a descendant from Old Third's bloodline, right?" he said coolly. "You know, I'm very disappointed by the Fang Clan. After all these years, you only have two Dao Realm experts.... Well, since that's the case, I'm just going to have to disband the current Fang Clan, starting today!"

"A new Fang Clan will begin on Planet East Victory, and I will lead it on a different path." With that, he waved his right hand, causing miserable screams to rise up from the members of the Fang Clan. Only the traitorous members were unaffected. Everyone else felt their blood begin to boil, as if it were literally burning.

It was the same with Meng Hao. His blood began to boil, as if it wanted to explode out of him. Fang Danyun, Fang Yanxu and even Fang Shoudao all experienced the same thing.

Because of Fang Daozi, the entire clan instantly changed.

Meng Hao trembled, but endured the pain, his eyes shining with a strange light.

"Father definitely knew all of this was going to happen. He sent me here to Planet East Victory. Therefore... there must not be any real danger. The Fang Clan... must still have one more move left."

Fang Shoudao was trembling. Considering the level of his cultivation base, he was incapable of stopping his blood from burning. From the feeling he got, Fang Daozi was in the Dao Realm, just like him. However, there was something completely unfathomable about him.

Fang Shoudao knew that in the Dao Realm, every additional Essence caused your cultivation base to experience drastic changes. A difference of one level was enormous, and yet, despite all this, Fang Shoudao's expression didn't reveal the slightest bit of alarm or shock. All he did was close his eyes.

That reaction caused Ji Xiufang to stare in shock. The alarm she felt in her heart continued to grow.

"For him to be so calm indicates that the Fang Clan hasn't played all of their trump cards. Why is he so calm even when poised on the brink of destruction!?"

Even as shock filled Ji Xiufang's heart, Fang Daozi caught sight of Fang Shoudao's calmness, and his heart thumped. Gradually, an idea was forming within his mind that even he didn't dare to think was possible.

As soon as the idea flared up, he pushed it down. He was just about to wave his hand, when his body began to tremble. His face then flickered rapidly, and his eyes flashed as they sought out Meng Hao from within the crowds.

When he looked over, Meng Hao's mind trembled. However, he clenched his jaw and looked back at Fang Daozi. Next to him, the terracotta soldier's eyes flickered, and it moved to stand in front of Meng Hao, exploding out with power to help protect Meng Hao. It raised its greatsword, seemingly ready to pay any price, even be crushed into dust, to keep Meng Hao safe.

It was at this point that Fang Daozi's face fell. "No. He's not here... he's...."

All of a sudden, he turned to look toward the rift from which the terracotta soldier had emerged.

He was looking... through the rift into the Ancestral Land!

“Impossible!!” Fang Daozi’s eyes widened as if he was looking at something completely and utterly unbelievable. He began to pant, his casual attitude disappeared, and his ancientness suddenly seemed to vanish. Without even thinking about it, he stepped backward a few paces, his eyes turning crimson.

“Impossible!! This is completely impossible!!” He seemed to be going mad. He roared and extended his right hand, pointing toward the rift. It was at this point that, all of a sudden, three streams of Essence qi shot out from Fang Daozi, causing everything to shake. Planet East Victory trembled so violently it seemed as though it might collapse.

One of those streams was just like Fang Yanxu’s Essence of plants and vegetation. It was an Essence of boundless life force, and as soon as it appeared, the sky dimmed and a huge wind kicked up.

The origin and source of all things is Essence!!

A thorough understanding of Essence, mastery and control of the control of Essence, that is the Dao Realm!

In addition to the Essence of plants and vegetation, there was a stream of flickering lightning that emitted rumbling sounds. That was... the Essence of lightning, an indestructible lightning that could eternally destroy everything in Heaven and Earth. When it appeared, the lightning bolt seemed to replace all the light in the world.

The third of Fang Daozi’s Essence streams was, shockingly... an incredibly strong aura of Death. It was the will of the underworld and the Yellow Springs, a magic of reincarnation!

It was the Essence of reincarnation!

These terrifying Dao Realm Essences shot toward the rift, as if to completely destroy it.

However, even as the three streams of Essence neared the rift, a hand slowly stretched out from within. It waved a finger, and all of the Essences vanished. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust....

The hand was incredibly withered, as if it didn't contain an ounce of blood within it. It looked like an old, dead tree, and yet, power appeared within that finger. It was a power that could shock Heaven and Earth, and shook the minds of the Dao Realm experts of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Furthermore, unprecedeted ripples spread out from the Ninth Mountain in that instant. It was as if there was someone in the Ji Clan who slept eternally... but had been awoken by the sudden appearance of that hand.

Fang Daozi's body trembled, and his face went ashen. A wild look of disbelief appeared in his eyes.

"The Withered Tree Blossoms in Spring Incantation 2.... Impossible. He's dead! I saw it happen with my own eyes! I felt him die! His Essence vanished, and his soul doesn't exist anywhere in Heaven and Earth. He was never reborn into the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

"I'm absolutely certain, that... he really did die that year! He couldn't possibly be alive! Who are you? WHO ARE YOU!?!?" Fang Daozi's heart was pounding, and he was filled with indescribable fear as he yelled, raving madly.

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1. Fang Daozi's name in Chinese is 方道子 Fāng dào zǐ – Dao is the same as "the Dao." Zi is "son" or "child." Actually, the Daozi is the same as what I usually translate as "Dao Child".
2. This magic is based on a Chinese idiom which means "to get a new lease on life, to be revived.

# Chapter 1003: First Generation Patriarch!

There had been many twists and turns during these upheavals in the Fang Clan. Fang Daozi had awakened; however, even that was not as astounding to the Ninth Mountain and Sea as this current scene.

The Dao Realm Patriarchs of all the sects and clans looked on with pale faces and trembling minds. When the hand stretched out of the vortex from the Fang Clan's ancestral Land, their minds went completely blank.

The first generation Patriarch of the Fang Clan was a person from the history of the Ninth Mountain and Sea that could never be forgotten

Long ago, when chaos reigned, he followed the mysterious Lord Li on a long campaign to vanquish all the powers of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. He started out as nothing, yet rose to a level of prominence that placed him higher than all the Heavens. He carried out a slaughter which caused all to dread him. His mad valiance stained every corner of the starry sky as red as blood!

It was during that time that they also came to know Lord Ji. They were three stunning, outstanding figures in history, Paragons of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, people who became the nightmares of an era.

They eventually gathered a following of three Greater Demons, as well as numerous other powerful experts who joined them for the purpose of unifying the Ninth Mountain and Sea. In the end, there were nine great Doyens.

When the chaos of the Ninth Mountain and Sea was finally brought to an end, the Demon Immortal Sect was founded. It was the most powerful sect in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, a force that all other powers and sects had no choice but to pay obeisance to.

During feasts and other occasions, people would often say that without the first generation Patriarch of the Fang Clan, perhaps... Lord Li's war for the Heavens would have been much more difficult. That was because there were numerous occasions on which the first generation Patriarch of the Fang Clan risked his own life to save Lord Li.

Because of all of that, the first generation Patriarch of the Fang Clan rocked the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea. Even though he had passed away in meditation long ago, the one withered hand that appeared now filled the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea with shock.

The Three Great Daoist Societies were astonished, and a huge commotion rose from the Ji Clan on the Ninth Mountain.

In fact, the will of the eternally slumbering first generation Patriarch of the Ji Clan, who had become undying by fusing with the Heavens, suddenly awoke and... looked in the direction of his old friend.

In the moment that he awoke, all of the natural laws in the entire Ninth Mountain and Sea grew calm.

It was as if, in that moment, there was nothing left in the whole Ninth Mountain and Sea other than the hand that had emerged from that rift. As the Essence power dispersed, a figure appeared, clad in a long green robe. He stepped slowly out of the vortex to become the center of all attention.

All members of the Fang Clan who saw him felt their minds rumbling, as if they were being struck by a hundred thousand lightning bolts. This person was very familiar to them. How could they not know who he was? There wasn't a single clan member who hadn't seen his picture in the past, and bowed in worship to it.

It was... the first generation Patriarch of the Fang Clan!!

Meng Hao felt as if his scalp was about explode. The shock felt by everyone else was nothing compared to how he felt. That was because Meng Hao instantly realized that this man... was the same corpse he had seen sitting cross-legged in the necropolis!

"He's... he's actually alive!" thought Meng Hao, panting. Then he thought back to how he had practiced cultivation in the necropolis, presumably under this man's observation, and he suddenly felt cold sweat dripping down his back.

As soon as the man stepped out of the vortex, Fang Shoudao's eyes went wide with excitement and reverence.

“Greetings, first generation Patriarch!” he said, immediately dropping to his knees to kowtow.

Fang Yanxu’s expression was calm. His injuries from moments ago were still there, but the alarm on his face before had been an act. Now, a look of pious zealotry could be seen as he dropped down to offer worship.

Fang Danyun similarly dropped to his knees.

All members of the Fang Clan dropped to their knees, their hearts trembling. As for the traitorous clan members, they stood there for a moment, quivering. Then one of them, it was hard to say who, dropped down to kowtow, and they all followed suit.

Suddenly, the earth began to crumble, and a huge hole appeared, which stretched all the way down to reveal the Seventh Patriarch, and all of the other Patriarchs with him, all of whom ceased fighting and dropped down in worship.

Meng Hao’s eyes were wide as he followed along with everyone else to offer formal greetings to the first generation Patriarch.

His mind was spinning as he suddenly thought about the things his father had told him before he had left for Planet East Victory. He had seemed very certain that Meng Hao would not be in any danger on Planet East Victory.

“The Nirvana Fruits were just bait to get me to come here...” he thought in a sudden moment of realization.

Ji Xiufang stared, dazed, and her entire body trembled violently as the green-robed man walked out of the vortex. She began to pant, and her mind was reeling. She had also seen depictions of the first generation Patriarch of the Fang Clan, and had heard many of the terrifying legends about him.

He was a person who... had struck even Lord Ji with terror back in the days when the two of them were contending for control of the Heavens!

It took Ji Xiufang only a split second to understand everything.

“So this is Fang Shoudao’s trump card,” she thought. “He knew all along that the first generation Patriarch was still alive. The whole time, their goal... had nothing to do with the Ji Clan. It was all for... Fang Daozi!!”

When she saw the first generation Patriarch walking out, her face drained of blood. She suddenly realized that from the very, very beginning, she herself had been nothing more than a clown. She had been completely confident that victory was already in her grasp, that all contingencies had been planned for with nothing overlooked. However... she had completely miscalculated the most important thing!

The first generation Patriarch was actually still alive!

“How could this be...? The Fang Clan’s first generation Patriarch died! Even the Essence of the Ninth Mountain and Sea confirmed it! There is no way that he could still be alive! The Essence of the Ninth Mountain and Sea belongs to Patriarch Ji! How could he possibly have made a mistake!?!?” As Ji Xiufang felt shock rolling through her, Fang Daozi gazed at the figure walking out of the rift, and mentally collapsed.

“Impossible.... This is simply impossible....” Fang Daozi was shaking hard. The person he had most feared in his entire life was none other than his father, the first generation Patriarch.

That terror was so great that, in the years during which Lord Ji fought for control of the Heavens, he had chosen to Sever his own fear. That fear was his inner Devil, and without severing it, he would have found it very difficult to advance his cultivation base ever again.

That inner Devil was actually a fetter that he had shackled himself with. During the war, he had sided with the Ji Clan, and when it came time for the Ji Clan and the Fang Clan to fight each other, he was the first person in the history of the Fang Clan... to ever betray his clan.

He would never forget the look of disappointment in his father’s eyes, that expression of sadness and guilt that covered his face. When Fang Daozi saw that, he was incredibly happy, and even started to laugh out loud.

You founded the Fang Clan? Well I’m going to destroy it! That’s because

I'm going to make a new Fang Clan, MY Fang Clan!

Those were the words Fang Daozi had spoken when his father had suppressed him. He had even laughed.

The Fang Clan lost that war. The Ji Clan won, gaining control of the Heavens, and securing Lordship of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. The reason for their victory wasn't solely because of the traitor Fang Daozi, but his betrayal had played a significant role.

As for Fang Daozi, he was eventually put down by the first generation Patriarch. Despite his grave crimes, the Patriarch couldn't bear to kill him. He destroyed his body, letting his soul remain behind to be reborn as a new member of the Fang Clan.

By the time the first generation Patriarch passed away into meditation, Fang Daozi had been reborn numerous times into the Fang Clan. Were it not for Ji Tian's use of Karma magic after the passing away of the first generation Patriarch, then perhaps Fang Daozi would have remained in that cycle of rebirth for all time. Life after life, never remembering who he was.

However, because of the magic of Karma, he awoke.

Then, he remembered everything that had happened, and that wild desire for the destruction of the clan burned in him once again.

He remained deeply hidden, restoring his cultivation base, not letting even a single hint out about his true identity. Eventually, he died and was reborn again. From then on, though, he awoke every time he experienced rebirth. Each time, he would continue to practice his cultivation, and gradually grew stronger and stronger.

However, he never dared to make a move. Although he had heard his father died, he wasn't absolutely, positively certain he was dead. He also wasn't sure whether his father had left behind any precautions before dying. However, he was patient. He waited and watched, never making a move, waiting until he was sure that he would succeed.

However, when Fang Heshan crushed that jade slip, the plan went into

motion early. Fang Daozi's hand was forced. Of course, even if the plan been carried out at some later time, the Fang Clan would still have been thrown into complete chaos because of the preparations made by the Ji Clan.

Their willingness to put the plan into action was due to the matter of the legacy of Lord Li, a legacy that even Lord Ji had not been able to acquire. The Ji Clan had suddenly calculated that destiny related to that legacy was on Planet East Victory.

Fang Daozi had waited until he was sure the Fang Clan had shown its entire hand, and was on its last legs. He was made even more confident... when Meng Hao absorbed the first generation Patriarch's Nirvana Fruit. Because of the bloodline sensation that Fang Daozi experienced, he was finally fully convinced that his father really was dead!

Therefore, he finally chose to reveal himself, and step into the light.

He had never imagined that after all of his analyses, after all of his preparations, in the moment when he was just about to succeed, all of a sudden he would find out that his father... wasn't actually dead!

"This is impossible! If you weren't really dead, why didn't you kill me earlier...?" cried Fang Daozi, trembling.

The person to answer was not the first generation Patriarch, but rather, Fang Shoudao.

"We were aware of the identities of all of the traitorous members of the Fang Clan," he said softly, "except for you. We could have killed them at any time. However, that wouldn't have done any good. As long as you remained alive, wiping them out would only be postponing the calamity."

"As for you, we really couldn't figure out who you were.... Only Ji Tian could possibly pick up clues regarding the first generation Patriarch's magical technique. Even I couldn't determine who you had been reborn as."

"Only your death can ensure that the roots of the Fang Clan's catastrophe would be severed.

"Therefore, we set up this elaborate scheme, the purpose of which... was

to lure you out!" As he spoke, his eyes shifted over to Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's face flickered. His heart was filled with complicated emotions as he looked at the rivers of blood staining the grounds of the ancestral mansion.

When the Second Patriarch, Fourth Patriarch and Sixth Patriarch heard Fang Shoudao's words, their faces went pale white.

"Well, who cares if you're still alive!?" growled Fang Daozi. "I might not have succeeded this time, but at least... I get to take a lot of members of the Fang Clan to the grave with me! That's good enough!" Fang Daozi threw his head back and laughed, his expression vicious. The instant he saw his father walk out, he knew... that he was defeated.

However, what he said as true. More than half of the entire clan had been killed. Rivers of blood and mounds of corpses could be seen everywhere.

Fang Shoudao didn't reply. He looked at Fang Daozi, his expression complex. As the Fang Clan's Earth Patriarch, he was aware of Fang Daozi's whole story. He also knew that Fang Daozi wasn't aware of the whole truth of the matter, which caused him to sigh.

"Senior Daozi," he said quietly, "this planet... is not the same Planet East Victory it used to be."

In response, Fang Daozi gaped, and his face fell. It was as if he had suddenly remembered something which caused his jaw to drop in shock.

It was in that moment that Fang Shoudao turned to the first generation Patriarch and bowed deeply.

The green-robed first generation Patriarch, who hadn't said a single word so far, extended his hand towards the lands around him.

Withered Tree... Blossoms in Spring!

# Chapter 1004: The Fang Clan!

“Withered Tree, Blossoms in Spring” contained two meanings. One meaning was that in the conclusion of all things that was death, there would often appear a bit of life. It was just like reincarnation, which connected life and death. It was a cycle, an endless, never-ending cycle.

Another meaning of the expression... was not that of reincarnation.

It was a meaning that pertained to a type of cycle, but not the blooming of spring; yet, it was equally about life.

Meng Hao looked on in astonishment as the first generation Patriarch waved his hand. Then, he watched wide-eyed as one of the most shocking things he had ever before witnessed played out in front of his very eyes.

What he saw was time suddenly come to a stop both inside and outside the ancestral mansion. Then, everything began to move backward!

Breath by breath, moment by moment, everything began to go in reverse. Blood that had sprayed out was returned to the body. Severed heads returned to the necks that they had left. Everyone who had toppled over in death, once again stood in place. People running forward began to speed backward. Adversaries locked in deadly fighting split apart.

Meng Hao panted as this happened to everyone in the entire Fang Clan, with the exception of himself and five other people. None of those five people seemed very surprised by what was happening.

They were: the first generation Patriarch, Fang Shoudao, Fang Yanxu, Fang Danyun and Fang Daozi.

Everyone else, including Ji Xiufang and the three Quasi-Dao experts, as well as everyone else in the Fang Clan, was affected by the magic.

Meng Hao panted as he saw fighting clan members separate and move back in time to their original positions. Even more shocking to Meng Hao was that he could actually... see himself.

He saw the entire fight with Fang Wei. He saw the deaths of Fang Wei, Fang Xiushan, and Fang Heshan, all playing in reverse. Everyone who

should have been dead, was now alive.

To be able to watch such things happening led to an indescribable feeling. Meng Hao was completely rattled.

Throughout the entire Fang Clan, time flowed in reverse. The blood that stained the ground vanished, and everyone who had died appeared alive once again, until finally, everyone was watching Meng Hao and Fang Wei fighting up in midair.

Suddenly, in the blink of an eye, everything went motionless.

Meng Hao stood there, expression blank as he stared.

It was at this point that the first generation Patriarch waved his hand again, causing all of the members of the Fang Clan who had died to all vanish. The loyal ones disappeared in the blink of an eye, leaving behind only the traitorous clan members.

Even Fang Wei disappeared.

Next, the first generation Patriarch clenched his hand into a fist. Rumbling sounds could be heard as the world in front of him collapsed. As it did, numerous dots of light could be seen falling down to the ground.

Back in the ancestral mansion, the loyal clan members who had died could now be seen, their expressions blank but tinged with disbelief.

“What just happened? I remember... I remember dying!”

“What is this place? Is this... still the Fang Clan?”

“Just what exactly is going on!?” The resurrected members of the Fang Clan looked around in shock. The surrounding traitorous clan members began to tremble violently. Then, blood sprayed out of their mouths and their gazes went dark as they toppled dead to the ground.

The Second Patriarch died. The Fourth and Sixth Patriarchs... died. They all died.

There was not a single exception!

Anyone who had betrayed the clan instantly died!

It was as if their deaths were the price that had to be paid to return the dead clan members to life!

Meng Hao looked out into the crowds and saw a young man who was... none other than Fang Wei!

As Fang Wei looked around, his expression was at first blank. However, his eyes quickly grew clear, and eventually, he found himself looking back at Meng Hao. His expression was a complex one as he sighed inwardly.

The cultivators of the various sects and clans of the Ninth Mountain and Sea watched with spinning minds. Even the Dao Realm Patriarchs were trembling, and looked terrified.

“A transformation between life and death? I can’t believe that the first generation Patriarch of the Fang Clan... has actually reached such a realm!!”

“But, how come I feel that this isn’t transformation, but rather... that he actually reached back in time, grabbed those dead people, and then pulled them here. W-what kind of cultivator is he? To be able to do something like that is absolutely terrifying!!”

“How enigmatic! The Fang Clan’s first generation Patriarch is impossible to predict!!”

As of this moment, Meng Hao finally realized why his father had been so certain that he was completely safe.... Also, he was now completely sure that his father had played a part in this plan regarding the first generation Patriarch.

“Fudge!” he thought. “Of course I was completely safe. Even if I died, the first generation Patriarch could bring me back.... But... but a magical technique like that is simply too Heaven-defying! How could a Dao like that even exist!?” His heart still surged with waves of shock. For some reason, he had the feeling that the terrifying first generation Patriarch’s magical technique was something that could only be used a limited number of times.

Also, it must surely come with some sort of backlash effect, as well as...

other limitations. Otherwise, the Fang Clan couldn't possibly have lost their war with the Ji Clan!

"Could it be that it only works on Planet East Victory?" he thought, his eyes narrowing. Then he thought back to something Fang Shoudao had said.

Planet East Victory is not the same Planet East Victory it used to be.... Meng Hao's heart trembled, and an idea suddenly popped up in his mind.

He thought about how the ultimate form of One Thought Stellar Transformation was... to transform into a planet!

His eyes went wide as he looked down at the ground beneath his feet. He almost couldn't believe that it was true.

"So THIS... is the Fang Clan?" he thought, his mind reeling.

Almost in the same moment that the members of the Fang Clan were resurrected, Ji Xiufang's heart filled with waves of astonishment. A critical sensation of life and death danger filled her. Without any further hesitation, she tried to flee, flying up into the air toward the starry sky. Whether or not she could succeed in escaping was irrelevant, she had no choice but to try.

She had never before seen a Daoist magic like this one, and seeing all of the members of the Fang Clan being resurrected filled her with intense fear.

It was the same with the three Quasi-Dao old men. Although they were insane, they were still capable of feeling fear. Scalps numb, faces pale, they turned and fled.

Fang Daozi stared blankly as the other clan members were resurrected, and slowly, a look of bitterness appeared in his eyes.

"It was all just a play," Fang Shoudao said softly, looking at Fang Daozi with a look that contained both empathy and pity.

A play. A play in which even the Ji Clan had become nothing but actors, actors come to participate in a grand performance. The fact that the first

generation Patriarch could be so domineering as to plot out such an enormous play caused Meng Hao to inhale deeply in shock.

However, he still had a strange feeling. Why... did the first generation Patriarch seem to... completely lack any sort of expression?

"Considering that father managed to reach the point of being able to transform into a planet," said Fang Daozi, a complex expression flickering in his eyes, "if he had wanted to find me, it would have been a simple matter." He looked hesitatingly toward Fang Shoudao.

"Because your father didn't want that," Fang Shoudao explained.

When Fang Daozi heard that, he began to shake. Then he threw his head back and burst out with bitter, uproarious laughter. He turned to look at the first generation Patriarch in his green robe, his expression one of grief, fury, and countless other emotions.

Considering who he was, and the level of his cultivation base, how could he not understand the situation? The first generation Patriarch in front of him was not his father's true self. His father... was really and truly dead.

What had appeared right now was, not really a clone, but actually... his father incarnated as a planet, then left behind as a trump card for the Fang Clan.

He was... the soul of the planet!

It was the soul of his father in a different state of existence!

Despite being dead, despite being the soul of a planet, he still complied with the dying wishes of the first generation Patriarch and did not seek out the reincarnated version of Fang Daozi, who harbored such evil intentions toward the clan.

"After the first generation Patriarch passed away into meditation, he left behind some dying words that I came to hear after I became the Earth Patriarch. Only recently did I come to understand that those words were actually meant for you.

"He believed that eventually, the day would come in some particular

generation that you would become the Fang Clan's Earth Patriarch, and thus, he left those words behind for you." Fang Shoudao looked at Fang Daozi with a complicated expression.

"Those words were... Everything I told you the year that I suppressed you... was true."

"True.... True...." Fang Daozi began to laugh with even greater bitterness. He looked over again at the figure of his father, a middle-aged man in a green robe. He would never forget the year that his father suppressed him, and what he had said. Back when he and the Ji Clan both followed Lord Li on the campaign trail, the Ji Clan had sown Karma onto the newly born Fang Daozi.

That Karma was very deep, and required the expenditure of almost all of Lord Ji's cultivation base, such that even the first generation Patriarch couldn't detect it.

By the time he did, it was too late. He went to war with the Ji Clan, not for rulership of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, but rather, for revenge.

Fang Daozi laughed bitterly, then flew up into the air, his thoughts in chaos. He no longer wished to remain on Planet East Victory, nor to see the other members of the Fang Clan. His head hurt, and madness filled him as he shot up into the starry sky.

Meng Hao felt torn as he watched Fang Daozi. Then he turned to look at the first generation Patriarch, and couldn't help but think about Ke Yunhai and Ke Jiusi. He also thought about his own father.

"Fang Xiufeng, Fang Xiufeng," he sighed. The more he thought about the situation, the angrier Meng Hao got. "Are you really my dad...? You were willing to throw your own son into a perilous situation like this? Well, you're my dad so I can't say anything, but is mom going to let you off the hook?"

Fang Shoudao did nothing to stop Fang Daozi. He watched him attempting to leave, then clasped hands and bowed deeply toward the first generation Patriarch.

"Patriarch, please execute those who have offended our clan!"

The first generation Patriarch's expression was the same as ever as he extended his right hand and pointed up into the sky. Rumbling could be heard, and a monstrous killing aura could be sensed. Shockingly... that aura did not come from the first generation Patriarch, but rather... it exploded out from the planet itself.

In that moment, all of the plants and trees on Planet East Victory, all of the numerous buildings, all of the living things, exploded with the desire to kill. This was the wrath of an entire planet!

The intense killing intent surged up into the sky, passing Fang Daozi without hurting him in the least. However, when it slammed into the Quasi-Dao experts, the three old men were instantly killed.

Wiping them out was as easy as crushing dried weeds. They weren't even qualified to fight back. Booms could be heard as they were transformed directly into ash. Then, the killing intent spread out further into the starry sky, where it caught up to Ji Xiufang. Her level of terror couldn't have been any higher as the killing intent slashed toward her.

"Patriarch, save me!!" she screamed, scared out of her mind. Despite being a Dao Realm expert, compared to the killing intent of an entire planet, she was weak beyond compare!

As of this moment, all of the powers in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were being given a demonstration... of the supremely domineering power that the Fang Clan had kept hidden for so long!

They were using actions to tell everyone that the Fang Clan... was just as powerful as it had always been! Anyone who offended the Fang Clan... would be executed no matter how far they tried to run!

# Credits

Translator: [Deathblade](#)

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